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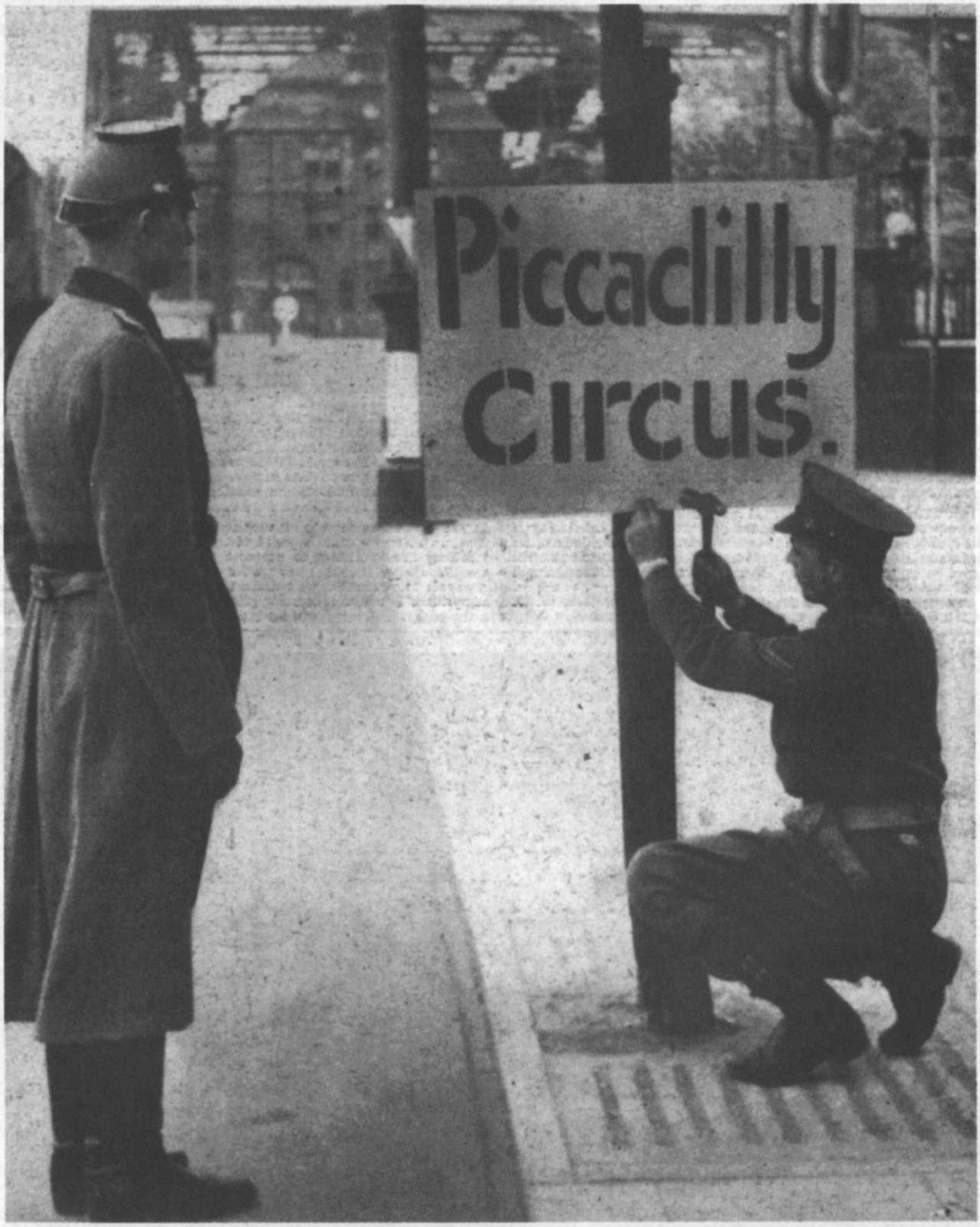
SIXPENCE Edited by Sir John Hammerton MAY 25, 1945




**IN HAMBURG, FOUR DAYS BEFORE GERMANY'S UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER,** a corporal of the British 2nd Army, watched closely by a German policeman, erected new street-signs: the Grosse Allee became "Piccadilly Circus." Germany's second largest city, with a peacetime population of over 1,700,000, surrendered to General Dempsey's troops on May 3, 1945; the vast dockyards were less badly crippled than had been anticipated, and many U-boats were found on the stocks. *Photo, British Official*

# Alexander Rings Down the Curtain in Italy

UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER to Field-Marshal Sir Harold Alexander, Allied Supreme Commander, Medjterranean, of nearly 1,000,000 Germans fighting in Italy was announced on May 2, 1945, and hostilities ceased that day at noon. The territory involved—that of the German South-West Command—included all northern Italy to the Isonzo River in the north-east, the Austrian provinces of Vorarlberg, Tirol and Salzburg, and portions of Carinthia and Styria.

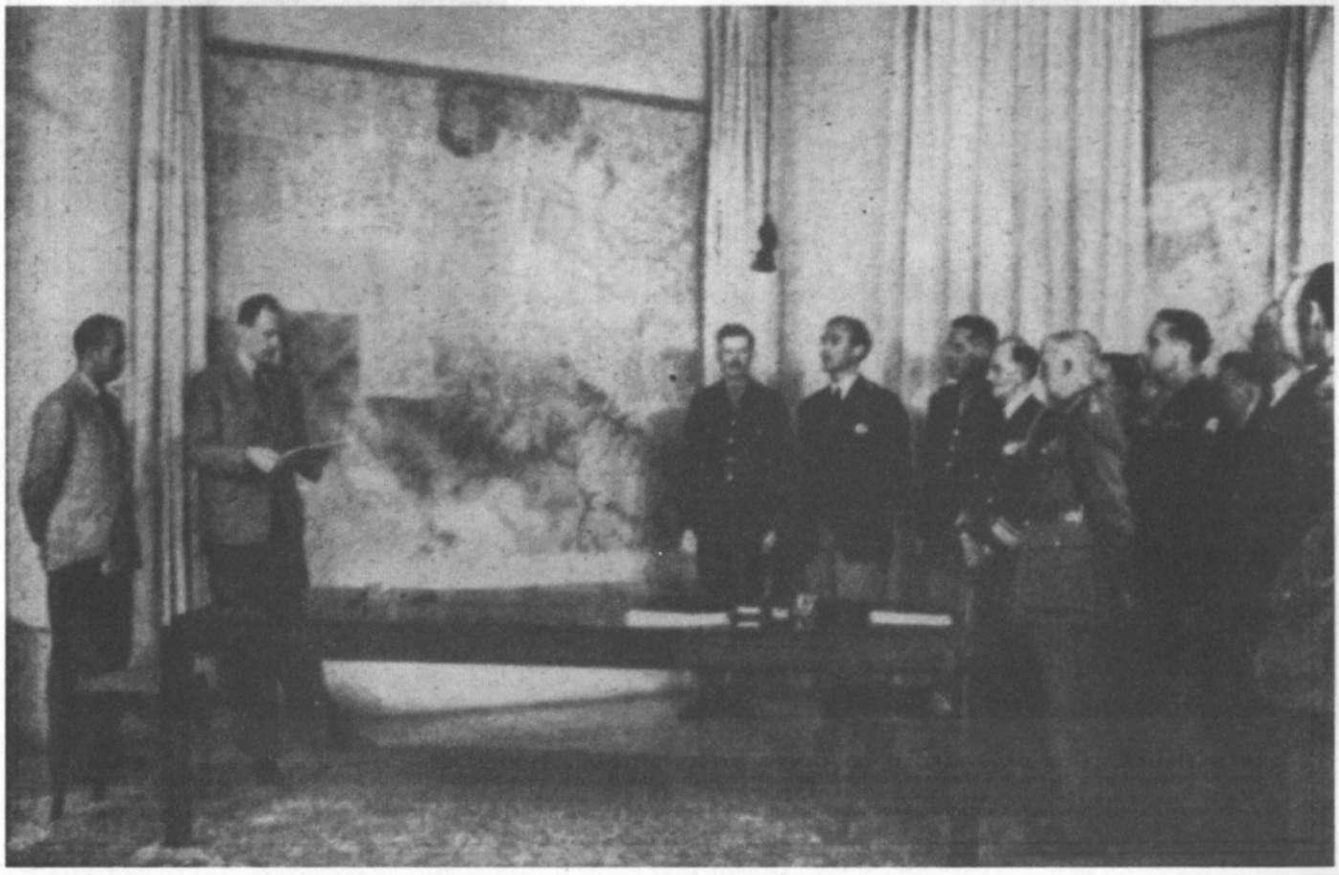
The instrument of surrender was signed on April 29, at Caserta, by two German plenipotentiaries and Lieut.-General W. D. Morgan, Chief of Staff of Allied Force H.Q. Both German representatives were in civilian attire; one signed on behalf of General von Vietinghoff-Scheel, the other on behalf of Obergruppenfuehrer Karl Wolff, Supreme Commander of the S.S. and police and the German general plenipotentiary of the Wehrmacht in Italy. One of the German agents signs the document (left). Lieut.-Gen. W. D. Morgan (right) signs for the Allies. Scene at the ceremony (below).

TO HIS VICTORIOUS TROOPS, in an Order of the Day issued on May 2, Field-Marshal Alexander declared: "After nearly two years of hard and continuous fighting which started in Sicily in the summer of 1943, you stand today as victors of the Italian campaign. You have won a victory which has ended in the complete and utter rout of the German armed forces in the Mediterranean. By clearing Italy of the last Nazi aggressor, you have liberated a country of over 40,000,000 people.

"Today the remnants of the once proud army have laid down their arms to you—close on 1,000,000 men with all their arms, equipment, and impedimenta. You may well be proud of this great, victorious campaign, which will long live in history as one of the greatest and most successful ever waged. No praise is high enough for . . . your magnificent triumph. My gratitude to you and my admiration are unbounded and only equalled by the pride which is mine of being your commander-in-chief."



*Photos, Allied Official*



# V Day & The War Illustrated

## By The Editor

TWENTY-SIX years and six months ago saw me preparing the issues of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED (1914-19) in which were recorded the total collapse of the Imperial German Army, the shameful surrender of the German Grand Fleet, the ignominious flight of the All Highest War Lord Kaiser Wilhelm.

Today, 8th May 1945, for the second time in an editorial life, I have a similar task in hand . . . but with a difference in circumstance beyond all imagining in November 1918. As the First Great War was ending we who had lived and worked through it trusted that the world would be spared any comparable tragedy at least for generations to come: some had even believed that we had been fighting "a war to end war." The Allies in 1918 had humbled to its knees one of the most aggressive and flashiest empires since that of Jenghiz Khan and his barbarians had disintegrated in the thirteenth century. But following the defeat of Germany, and thanks in large measure to lack of co-ordination between the victorious powers; also to the ill-judged clemency with which the victors treated the vanquished but revengeful Germanic tribes—who still remained as barbaric as the hordes of Jenghiz—these predatory people were able to reorganize themselves under a new and vastly more ruthless leadership, and by 1939 to challenge again the peaceable peoples in a yet more desperate bid for "world dominion."

A NEW March of the Barbarians began: these dehumanized Huns of the West were soon to over-run Europe, and dreaming of a new Empire of Barbarism under the maniac leadership of Adolf Hitler, threw themselves with all their fury and fanaticism against Soviet Russia, on June 22, 1941, precipitating that Anglo-Russian alliance which after Britain's year of lone defiance proved the next great obstacle to the March of the Barbarians.

In France, and throughout its empire, men whose names had once been honoured had now thrown in their lot with the invader to their everlasting shame: most shameful of all Marshal Pétain, General Weygand and Admiral Darlan, who, but resolute against the common foe in the summer of 1940, might well have helped to change the subsequent course of the War, had they believed in Britain's power of recovery after Dunkirk.

**We British must never forget that the true turning point of the war was the Battle of Britain: the most glorious epic of our race. Had not the splendid youth of the R.A.F. so superbly acquitted themselves in that tremendous encounter with the boasted Luftwaffe, when in the historic three months beginning August 8, 1940, they "clawed down" no fewer than 2,375 enemy planes out of British skies, the Hitlerian Empire might well have had a longer run, Russia's resistance and heroic resurgence would surely have provided strangely different chapters for the historian, and the United States would have seen the war carried into their own land.**

NOR at this historic moment of stupendous victory should we hesitate to remind the world that it was British valour, British skill, British endurance that made incomparably the noblest contribution to the resurgence of the democratic countries which we are now celebrating.

Every nation of Europe, including Russia, and by the same token the U.S.A., would have had its history "changed for a thousand years," as Hitler had promised his Germanic tribes, had the British peoples lost faith in their own high destiny. Let us ask ourselves, therefore, what would have happened had Hitler won, and having contemplated the horror which the question implies, every loyal Briton can reflect with pride that it was his or her country *alone* that held up the march of the modern barbarians, until Russia was forced in, and Japan on December 7, 1941, struck the blow at Pearl Harbour which stung the United States into participation under the leadership of President Roosevelt—a leadership that will rank with Lincoln's at one of the other crises in American history.

THE short-lived Hitlerian Empire which was to bring wealth with power to the *Herrenvolk;* and was to endure for a thousand years as the majority of these square-head Germans no doubt believed, has crumbled to dust before the eyes of its creator; the chief breeding places of the whole of this pestiferous race have been rubbed from the face of Europe. Hitler promised his people that he would "erase" the cities of Great Britain while protecting those of his beloved Germany from harm. Dire has been our own suffering from his piloted planes, and those "secret weapons" the flying-bomb and rocket; but not comparable with what Germany has had to endure at the hands of Anglo-American air attacks.

This overwhelming superiority in the air has been a determining factor in the Second Great War—just as the British air power proved in the First—a factor that could never have reached the dimension necessary in this mightier conflict without the magnificent contribution of America in men and machines.

HOW abysmal has been the failure of the Germans can best be measured by recalling their war aims. In THE WAR ILLUSTRATED, December 7, 1918, we printed an extract from the *Kolnische Zeitung*, September 1914, reprinted again in this page together with some typical examples of Hitler's threats and promises. These ought to be accepted as having had the endorsement of every Nazi and of most Germans who are now eagerly assuring us they never sympathized with the National Socialist Party which has brought their country to irretrievable ruin.

With the end of the European War, our task in THE WAR ILLUSTRATED is not yet complete. There remains Japan, whose military chiefs went one better than Hitler by declaring their preparedness to "fight for a hundred years." But Japan, I am persuaded, will collapse sooner than is generally believed.

It would seem, therefore, that the time is not distant when, as in 1919, I shall have to frame some announcement about bringing our picture-record of events to an end. It can at least be promised that there will be no abrupt closing down of THE WAR ILLUSTRATED: we shall continue until the declared object with which No. 1 was issued on Sept. 16, 1939 —to provide "a permanent picture-record of the Second Great War"— has been achieved. J. A. H.

### 1914. GERMANY'S THREAT

THERE will be no such country as Great Britain in existence at the end of the war. In its place we shall have Little Britain, a narrow strip of island territory, peopled by loutish football kickers living on the crumbs that Germany will deign to throw to them. Certain it is that the laughable and childish military system of Britain will shortly fall to pieces.

Then the once mighty Empire, with her naval strength represented by the few old tubs which Germany will have left her, will become the laughing-stock of the nations, the scarecrow at which children will point their fingers in disdainful glee.

*Cologne Gazette, Sept.* 1914

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### 1941 HITLER'S THREATS

THIS struggle can end only with the complete annihilation of one or other of the two adversaries. Mr. Churchill may believe that this will be Germany. I know it will be Britain.

*Speech to Reichstag, July* 19, 1940

If the British attack our cities we will simply erase theirs. The hour will come when one of us two will break up and it won't be Nazi Germany. If the British drop two or three thousand bombs on us, we will unload 150, 180, yes, 200,000 on them.

*Broadcast, Sept.* 4, 1940

When the hour strikes we shall deal decisive blows against Britain. These gentlemen will be taught by history this year.

*Nazi Party meeting, Berlin, Jan.* 30, 1941

# MY VISIT TO WARTIME HOLLAND

by Captain NORMAN MACMILLAN, M.C., A.F.C.

CONTROL of the waterways is so important in Holland that a Government minister of public works (Waterstaat) is responsible for this feature of Dutch life, and each district in Holland has its own waterways engineer. In the area around Nijmegen and Arnhem, where flow the Maas, the Waal, and the Neder Rijn, the problem is aggravated by the very low level of the land contained within the courses of the three rivers, known as "the island." During the late winter, when the rivers are in flood, their water level may run twenty feet above that of the surrounding countryside.

The Germans had blown the dykes to flood the flanks of the British positions east of Nijmegen. Here was a great inland sea. Between Krannenburg and Beek (Dutch railway frontier town) it washed right over the road, but vehicles continued to drive through it with great bow waves sending the water rippling in all directions. On the opposite side of the road the ground rose to a wooded hill clear of the flood; there summer villas stood untouched by war or flood, but without occupants.

FACING the river I surveyed a scene of desolation. Water rushed through a gap in the dyke that ran outwards from the road like a breakwater. Some houses were almost submerged. Villages that stood on slightly higher ground were cut off like islands. Greenhouses showed their top lights above the water. The upper framework of a glider rose from the water half a mile away, like the skeleton of an antediluvian monster. A church spire stood sentinel amid the waters half-way between us and Germany, over there beyond the Rhine.

A squadron of buffaloes, returning from patrol, came splashing roadwards from the east. Seated in one were two prisoners of war who looked both materially and spiritually damp. In all were British troops whose land tanks had been caught by the floods. The amphibious tanks churned their way over the water with the thrust of the little cupid's bow-shaped steel paddles that projected transversely from their tracks; when they reached the land these paddles gripped the mixture of gravel and mud and hauled the buffaloes on to the tar macadam road. They were manned by cheerful Canadians, who said they would rather go to battle in buffaloes than in any other way.

### Amphibians Foiled the Germans

Each buffalo is a self-contained unit with one officer and its crew; there is a large open-well interior, wherein there is plenty of room if not much comfort, and crews can eat and sleep aboard. They are lightly armed with cannon and machine-guns. With the Ducks (wheeled vehicles driven on the water by a screw propeller) these amphibians foiled the German attempt to break the 1st Canadian Army flank by flooding, and made the flooded area more of a nightmare to the Germans than ourselves. Later they were the spearhead that crossed the Rhine. The only infantry I saw on the march in this zone were the sections of a company of Canadians moving up in single file to join the buffaloes and go into action with them. All the other troops rode to war.

After driving along the flooded road our car engine died, due to a flooded ignition system. After an abortive attempt to cure the trouble on the roadside, we were nosed out of a traffic jam we had created by a little armoured scout car, whose driver then tried to start us up by towing, but without success. A M.T. section in the woods could not help us, and the car had to be towed back to Nijmegen, where a mechanic who knew the engine design stripped the distributor and dried it so that the plugs would spark.

**Gen. KURT DITTMAR, Wehrmacht radio commentator, who surrendered to the U.S. 30th Division on the Elbe on April 25, 1945, chatted nonchalantly with a French war correspondent.** *Photo, Keystone*

MEANWHILE, I walked into Beek with R. J. Montgomery of the B.B.C. Two Free Dutch soldiers guarded the Customs control post. For us there were no formalities; for those in civilian clothes there were. (In many parts of Holland I saw Dutchmen on road control work, some wearing only armlets to indicate they were traffic controllers.) Beek was surrounded by 25-pounder guns that barked incessantly from between the houses, among the trees, beside the floods.

The prisoner-of-war cage—in this case an erroneous term, for there was no wire—was in the restaurant of a small hotel that stood back from the road; a wood building, with a veranda. The room was bare, with painted wood walls. On a raised portion of the floor, where, perhaps, once a band had played in peacetime, about 40 German soldiers sat on benches. They were mostly young men up to 20 years, but about a quarter of their number were oldish men. All looked extremely docile. The Canadian sergeant, who spoke German, said they had had one very arrogant chap earlier.

TO the right, on the lower floor, two German officers sat on chairs. One, tall and fair-haired, wore a voluminous macintosh and a peaked cap. The other, shorter and swarthy, was coatless, rather dapper despite his unshaven chin, dressed in tunic, breeches and field boots, with a forage cap; he smoked a pipe. Both belonged to the infantry. Their clothes were soiled with dried mud. About every minute the room shook like a jelly when a 25-pounder fired just outside.

Montgomery, an Afrikaans-speaking South African, had been in Germany before the war and spoke fluent German. I do not speak fluent German, but I understood most

**ROYAL MARINE COMMANDO of the British No. 1 Commando Brigade, carrying a tommy-gun, looks back over the famous north German river Elbe which he and his comrades crossed on April 29, 1945, establishing a broad bridge-head and capturing Lauenburg. Quick-firing A.A. gun in the foreground was not needed.** *Photo, British Official*

**ACROSS THE DANUBE BY TANK-DESTROYER** rode these U.S. 7th Army infantrymen; General Patch's troops crossed without opposition when they captured the bridge at Dillingen on April 22, 1945, forging swiftly towards Munich, which fell eight days later. *Photo, U.S. Official*

of what was said. Both men went straight from school to the army. They were now 23 and had known nothing in adult life but war. From the age of about 10 they had been schooled in the Nazi outlook, and one certainly had it indoctrinated within his mind; the other seemed puzzled by its results, and was less assertive about its values, but nevertheless it obviously affected his judgement.

ONE had fought two years and a half on the Russian front, and said he was happier to be taken prisoner in the west. As he talked he grew more vehement, especially about German *lebensraum*. The Sudetenland, Danzig and Memel were German; the souls of Danzigers had cried out to belong to the Reich. It was wrong that Germany had been forced into war because she desired only what was German. That was his theme. These two men could see no viewpoint but their own. The silent one nodded approval of all his comrade said. They had no thought for the nations ravished by the Wehrmacht. All was reserved for Germany, past, present, and future. They said that if the war would only finish, and the Germans were allowed to go back to Germany, they would soon rebuild everything that had been destroyed there.

I said to them, "We once had a king who came from Herrenhausen, so by your argument Hanover should belong to Britain!' The macintosh-clad officer, who appeared to know as much English as I knew German, laughed and translated to his companion, who shrugged his shoulders. They said they knew Germany could not then win the war, but as the Allies would give the Germans no terms they must go on fighting to the end. By doing so they would lose no more, and might gain something. At least the Allies would have to pay for their policy. How Goebbels would have applauded his disciples!

A LORRY drew up outside. The Canadian sergeant ripped out a command. The German soldiers rose and ran to the door and stopped in a bunch just inside. Then they got the order to get in. They scrambled quickly on to the lorry, and stood packed tight one against another in its open truck. The officers ended their conversation, rose, bowed, and left the room, climbed into the cab beside the driver, and that group of prisoners left the forward cage.

Nijmegen, with 81,686 population, is the largest town in Gelderland. For a Dutch town it stands high, on a slope that rises steeply from the south bank of the Waal, and on the level ground above. The old town has narrow streets and close-set houses, the newer part wide roadways and spacious gardens. It has seen war throughout the centuries. Captain Churchill of the Grenadiers—later the Duke of Marlborough, ancestor of our present Premier—attracted the attention of General Turenne by his bravery at the capture of Nijmegen in 1672.

THE scout car driver stopped on a rising street outside a row of houses to ask where the M.T. depot was, and, as usual, some Dutch children came up to look into the car. One boy of about eight—Toni Neppelbuerger—said he and his younger sister slept in a loft at the top of the three-floored house he pointed out. Toni said he was afraid of nothing, not even when two nights before the bombers came and went "boom-boom!"—the night when Bomber Command bombed Cleve. While the car was being serviced, another Dutch boy came up to ask if we needed billets. He said his mother had a room that could sleep ten. They were expecting Canadians, who so far had not arrived, so if we were held up he proudly announced that we could have a room to sleep in there.

Nijmegen was packed with men, armour and transport. Tanks and trucks stood in every side street. Long lines of vehicles, guns, and their attendant soldiers moved through the town. What a target for night bombers! Cleve and Goch must have been like that when our heavies struck. Here, in Nijmegen, but for the sound of our own guns, and as night fell the motionless searchlight fingers that cut the sky as direction markers for night patrols, there was little to suggest that one was in a front line town.

A NAAFI canteen and an ENSA cinema were housed in one building that must have been a place of amusement before the war. The canteen was a rotunda. There was scarcely a vacant seat. Dutch girls worked at the counter and in the kitchen and served the tables. Montgomery and I joined two soldiers at a table. For them and ourselves we ordered four cups of tea, and ten finger-roll sandwiches for the car journey we had still to make; for these we paid one Dutch guilder 45 cents—two shillings and eightpence-halfpenny at the ruling rate of exchange. We were asked to produce paper to enwrap our sandwiches for the car.

**P.O.W. CAMP AT WESTERTIMKE,** north-east of Bremen, was labelled with a "to let" notice by British troops—including Scots and Welsh Guards—when they overran it on April 27, 1945. *Photo, British Official*

**ON THE KRANNENBURG-BEEK ROAD,** almost submerged in the Rhine-Waal floods in February 1945, Capt. Norman Macmillan, Special Correspondent for "The War Illustrated" (left), and R. J. Montgomery, of the B.B.C., watched supplies move up to the line.

# THE BATTLE FRONTS

by Maj.-Gen. Sir Charles Gwynn, K.C.B., D.S.O.

MAY 2, 1945, will, I think, always be remembered as the day on which major operations in the European theatre of the World War came to an end, and therefore may be even more important than the day on which Germany's unconditional surrender was accepted. The former may be looked on as the military, the latter as the political winning post.

Apart from its great military and political importance no event, however great, will I think give more universal satisfaction than the unconditional surrender of the Axis forces in Italy and an immense extent of territory to Field-Marshal Alexander. Mr. Churchill, as usual backed by the applause of Parliament, evidently feels, and has given expression to, what we all, I hope, recognize was due to the Field-Marshal and his very gallant, efficient and long-suffering armies. They have had an immensely difficult and often a heart-breaking and thankless task. They have had to operate in a terrain and under weather conditions which gave a strong and highly efficient enemy every advantage and caused great hardships. When victory appeared to be in sight they saw some of their best troops transferred to other theatres.

### ASSORTMENT of Nationalities Welded Into Winning Team

Nothing, surely, could be more likely to suggest the idea that their job was of secondary importance and did not demand wholehearted effort or extreme sacrifices. Yet they stuck to their task and there was no relaxation of effort, even when only small scale operations were feasible. When conditions became more favourable and the time arrived for the decisive effort it lacked nothing in energy, speed and willingness to drive home the blow. Immense as is the credit due to the troops I feel certain that they would be the first to acknowledge how much they owe to the leadership of Field-Marshal Alexander and General Mark Clark. Few men could have welded such an amazing assortment of nationalities into a team of such quality.

For the Empire it must always be a particular source of gratification that the 8th Army has added yet another great victory to the record of its achievements, and that its traditions have not been lost in spite of many changes in its commanders and constituent elements. If German die-hards ever really hoped that they would be able to prolong resistance in their "Southern Redoubt" the surrender in Italy finally quenched the hope. When Kesselring decided, or more probably was ordered by Hitler, not to withdraw across the Po after his Gothic line was broken, it was clear that he had burnt his boats. For with ever-diminishing transport it was certain that withdrawal would become increasingly difficult as weather conditions improved and favoured pursuit. By the time Vietinghoff-Scheel had replaced Kesselring it was apparent that the only alternatives open to him were a suicidal last struggle where he stood, or a last minute attempt at retreat.

THE fact that Field-Marshal Alexander's forces were so greatly weakened and of such strange composition may have raised hopes of at least saving part of his force by retreat covered by determined rearguards. If such were his hopes they were probably finally shattered by the very effective action of the Italian patriots. It was not the least of Alexander's achievements that the sympathy he had shown to the underground movement and the steps he had taken to ensure that the rising should be well organized and well-timed bore fruit, and made an important contribution to the completeness of his victory.

It was a remarkable coincidence that the cease fire in Italy, the surrender of Berlin, and of the Army which had apparently been ordered to relieve the city, and the arrival of the British 2nd Army on the shores of the Baltic should all have occurred on the same day. The surrender of Berlin was clearly an event that equalled if it did not exceed the Italian surrender in importance, and it undoubtedly resulted from perhaps the bitterest fighting in the war. Here more than anywhere else the Germans carried out their intention of making a last-ditch stand

**MEN OF THE QUEEN'S REGIMENT, on armour and transport, move through the centre of Hamburg, Germany's leading port, which surrendered on May 3, 1945.**
*Photo, British Official*

and they fought with a fanatical determination only exceeded by the fury of the Russians' relentless attack. Every weapon in the German armoury was brought into play to stimulate resistance and fanaticism. The Hitler myth was exploited by Goebbels with his usual skill and disregard of truth. Promises of relief were continued after all hope had vanished, and even the Luftwaffe appeared to drop ammunition to the defenders.

To Zhukov's and Koniev's Armies, which broke the really formidable German defences on the Oder and engaged at Berlin the greater part of the German forces still willing to fight, the Western Powers certainly owe the comparative ease with which their final advances were carried out. In counting our own losses and our own captures the sacrifices the Russians made in these last battles should not be forgotten. The 2nd Army's advance to the Baltic, well designed to link quickly with Rokossovsky's advance, although it had very important strategical results in defeating any plans the Germans may have had of establishing a northern stronghold, was achieved more by skilful and energetic execution than by hard fighting. It certainly gave no indication of relaxation of effort. The surrender of Hamburg unexpectedly on the following day testified to the success of the operation.

The annihilation or surrender of all enemy forces caught between Dempsey's and Rokossovsky's armies had become a certainty, but that Field-Marshal Montgomery should immediately receive the unconditional surrender of the whole of the enemy opposing him could not have been expected. It is surely a matter for legitimate pride that he and Field-Marshal Alexander should have been the first of all the Allied commanders to finish the war on their respective fronts.

OF all the surrenders which took place in the week before the fall of Berlin the voluntary surrender of General Dittmar seemed to be one of the most significant. His frank and realistic broadcasts had for long marked him as the mouthpiece of the General Staff rather than of Goebbels. His surrender therefore was a clear indication of the state of mind of an important section of highly placed professional officers. The interview a B.B.C. representative had with Dittmar threw an interesting light on a number of points. For instance, he asserted that Rundstedt realized that his counter-offensive was strategically unsound and that the reserves he employed in it should have been kept for use elsewhere, but that he was forced into the enterprise by Hitler. Moreover he revealed that Rundstedt's objectives were in reality less ambitious than those proclaimed. This bit of information, if correct, gives me I admit some satisfaction, since it seems to agree with the views I expressed at the time. What is more important is Dittmar's evident desire to throw all the blame for Germany's military defeat on to Hitler's interference and suppression of all generals who showed signs of outstanding ability and independence.

After the last war it is notorious that the German officer class denied military defeat and attributed the collapse to the home front. This time it looks as if they had already decided to make Hitler the sole scapegoat for military defeat, and Himmler's S.S. for atrocities committed. One can trust a German to invent excuses and even to believe in them! In this case they are to some extent justifiable, for if Hitler's death had occurred some years earlier the strategic blunders for which he was undoubtedly responsible would probably not have been made by professional soldiers.

### BURMA

While such great events were happening in Europe perhaps too little attention was being paid to the great achievements of General Slim's 14th Army in Burma. I confess that I, and many others better qualified by local experience to judge, have always considered that it would be impossible to effect the liberation of Burma and the recapture of Rangoon by an army invading from the north. Even allowing for the potentialities of air transport, advance as far as Mandalay seemed hardly practicable. Now General Slim has conclusively proved us wrong, for undoubtedly he would have recaptured Rangoon without the assistance of the force landed in the Irrawaddy Delta just as he was closing in on the city, welcome as no doubt the assistance was. The Japanese have suffered such a heavy defeat that it seems probable they will not make determined efforts to retain the southern strip of Burma, but will concentrate on holding Malaya and covering Thailand where there are greater possibilities of maintaining communications with Japan.

The landing of an Australian force on Tarakan island close to Borneo is another notable event, and it will, I hope, give general satisfaction that Australian forces have now been allotted a more interesting and congenial task than that of liquidating the by-passed Japanese detachments in New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago.

# How Dempsey's Scottish Troops Cleared Bremen

**KING'S OWN SCOTTISH BORDERERS** picked off Nazi snipers down a street in the great north German port of Bremen, which troops of Gen. Sir Miles Dempsey's British 2nd Army cleared on April 27, 1945. In the background, a crowd is assembled outside one of the city's vast air-raid shelters. Constructed of solid blocks of concrete, each shelter had its own telephone, lighting, heating and air-cooling system. Sixteen U-boats, almost completed, were seized in Bremen's famous Deschimag shipyards (see illus. p. 42).



*Photo, British Official*

# Allied Link-Up on the Elbe Split the Reich

**HANDSHAKES AT TORGAU,** 30 miles north-east of Leipzig, on April 26, 1945, sealed the link-up between the Allied armies advancing from the west and the Soviet forces who had battled the long road from Stalingrad, the historic meeting cleaving the Reich in two. Maj.-Gen. E. F Reinhardt, commanding the 69th Division, U.S. 1st Army (1, third from right), chatted with the Russian general (second from right) commanding the 58th Guards' Division of the Soviet 1st Ukrainian Front.

Outside Torgau, a U.S. Army lieutenant talked with a girl of the Soviet armed forces and a member of the Russian Guards Division (2). Balancing on the fragments of a bridge, men of the Allied armies stretched out welcoming hands to one another (3). U.S. and Red Army troops discussed the position (4), with a map spread on the bonnet of a jeep.

See also story in page 57.

*Photos, U.S. Official, Associated Press, Keystone, Pictorial Press*

# Proudly the Red Flag Flies on the Reichstag

**POUNDED HEART** of the dying Third Reich, Berlin was entered on April 23, 1945, by troops of the Red Army; Soviet tanks and infantry move on through one of the central streets (1). The capital was entered simultaneously by forces of Marshal Zhukov's 1st White Russian Front from the north and east and of Marshal Koniev's 1st Ukrainian Front from the south. On April 30 the Red Flag was hoisted above the shattered Reichstag building (2), Soviet tanks looming in the foreground. On that memorable day thousands of German prisoners passed under the famous Brandenburg Gate (3).

Soviet advance into the German capital was led by 162 generals and spearheaded by tanks. Cannon- and rocket-firing fighters of the 2nd T.A.F., R.A.F., flying alongside bombers of the Red Air Force, struck at German convoys with men and supplies for the centre of the city.

*Photos, U.S.S.R. Official, Planet News, Pictorial Press*

# THE WAR AT SEA

*by* Francis E. McMurtrie

So far as Germany is concerned the war at sea is at an end. With the surrender of submarines at British ports, the experience of 1918 is being repeated. The only important warships that have so far fallen into our hands appear to be the Prinz Eugen and the Nürnberg, at Copenhagen.

Having regard to all the circumstances, a "last ditch" stand in Norway was never a really practical proposition. By the time this is in print, the Norwegians will again be in control of their country and be engaged in disarming the German hordes who have so long defiled it. Those who credited Grossadmiral Dönitz with the intention of carrying on submarine warfare from Norwegian bases were deceived by his blustering words when he assumed the now empty office of Fuehrer. However truculent he may have sounded, he was not quite such a fool as to carry on a hopeless struggle with all the odds against him at this stage.

THOUGH few people in this country have met Dönitz, I was recently lucky enough to obtain a personal estimate of him from the man who accepted his surrender towards the end of the last war. Commodore Humphrey W. Best, C.B.E., D.S.O., R.N., describes him as being "a typical Prussian," with a surly and bad-tempered demeanour when taken prisoner.

This occurred on October 4, 1918, when Dönitz was in command of the submarine UB 68, operating from an Adriatic base. He was lying in the path of a convoy, for the escort of which Lieut.-Commander Best (as he then was) commanded a force comprising his own ship, the 1200-ton sloop Snapdragon, and four armed trawlers. One of the trawlers sighted the submarine on the surface and gave the alarm ; it was then six o'clock in the morning. Forced to make a crash-dive, the U-boat appears somehow to have damaged her hydroplanes (the diving rudders which force a submarine below), and again emerged on the surface astern of the convoy. Here she was attacked by the Snapdragon and the other ships, whose combined gunfire inflicted irreparable damage on the enemy. Dönitz and his men hastened to abandon the crippled submarine before she sank, and were mostly picked up, to the number of 30 or more.

In spite of his arrogant manner, the drenched Dönitz was lent a spare suit of uniform by the captain of the Snapdragon ; this he returned, with an abrupt note of thanks in broken English, after he had been landed at Malta.

## U-BOAT Menace Was the Greatest Peril This Country Has Faced

His circumstances in 1945 were very much the same as in 1918 ; he was in a sinking ship, and chose to give up rather than go down with her. For the 200 or more U-boats in Norwegian ports to continue their attacks on shipping would have offered nothing better than the prospect of being hunted down and exterminated like rats ; while the duration of their operations would have been severely limited by the extent of their resources in fuel, torpedoes and other supplies. Nor is it likely that the officers and men of the German submarine service, with their country occupied and no idea of what is happening to their homes, displayed any enthusiasm for a continuance of the fight, even if Dönitz ever tried to put forward the idea seriously.

Yet the fact must never be ignored that the U-boat menace has been the greatest peril this country has faced in this war, as in the last. If the enemy could have contrived to cut all communication by sea between Britain and the rest of the world, we should have been beaten. Food, petroleum and munitions would have been denied us, and, without these, all resistance would speedily have been overcome.

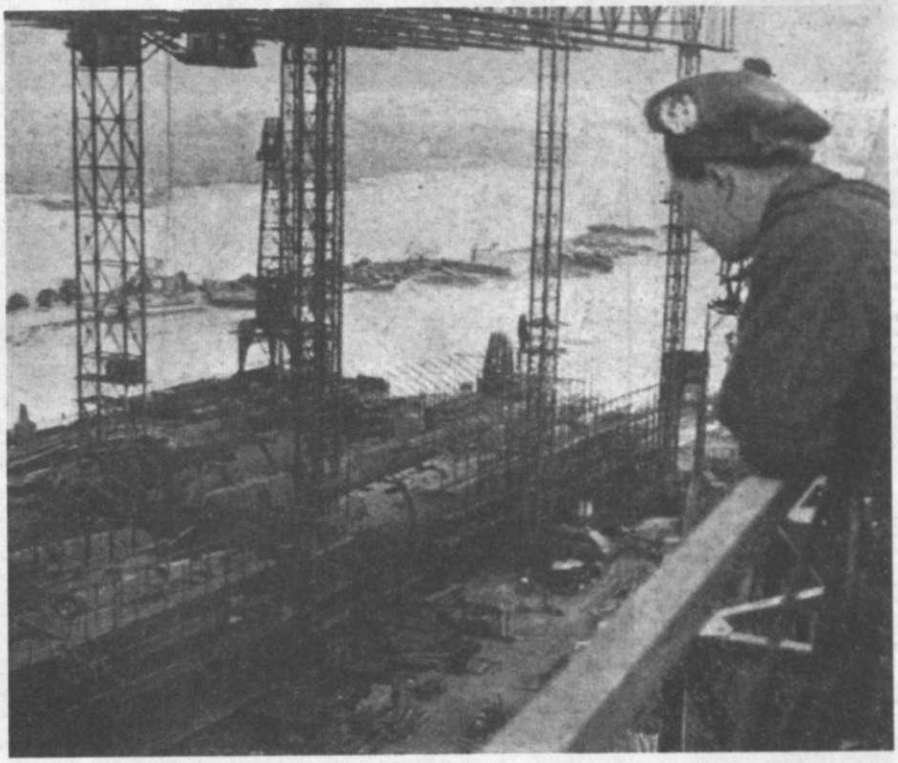
There is no doubt Hitler fully appreciated this, having studied the history of the previous Great War. In 1935, when he ordered submarine building to be resumed, it was with the design of undermining British sea power, which was otherwise bound to overcome Germany. On the very first day of the war the sinking without warning of the liner Athenia gave the cue to what was to follow.

Fortunately, anti-submarine methods had not been neglected by the Royal Navy in the interval between the two wars, and all plans had been prepared to put in force a general system of convoy within a few days of the outbreak of hostilities. It was this which held and then parried the initial submarine attack.

When France fell out of the war and Italy came in on the other side, the odds in favour of the U-boats were much improved. Not only were the Allied naval forces reduced in numbers and faced with the fresh task of opposing the Italian fleet, but the occupation by the enemy of the French Atlantic harbours gave him a series of submarine bases from which attacks could be launched on the Atlantic trade routes with far better prospects of success.

Thus 1940-41 were the most critical years of the conflict. Losses of shipping ran into millions of tons, and the situation was grave in the extreme. Yet in the later months of 1941 the augmenting of escorts by the large numbers of corvettes ordered in 1939-40 began to yield results, and the U-boats found themselves sinking fewer merchant vessels at greater cost. Moreover, as British aircraft output increased, it was found possible to spare more aircraft for operation by Coastal Command in the narrow seas which soon became unhealthy for the enemy

JAPAN'S entry into the war imposed a further strain on British naval resources. Until the United States Navy had recovered from the initial shock administered at Pearl Harbour, and had implemented its matchless capacity for reinforcement, the situation again became threatening. The U-boats found a new harvest awaiting them in the Western Atlantic, with American coastal traffic almost unprotected from the assault that was launched against it. A convoy system had to be organized with the aid of experienced British personnel and escort vessels, but it took some months for the situation to be restored.

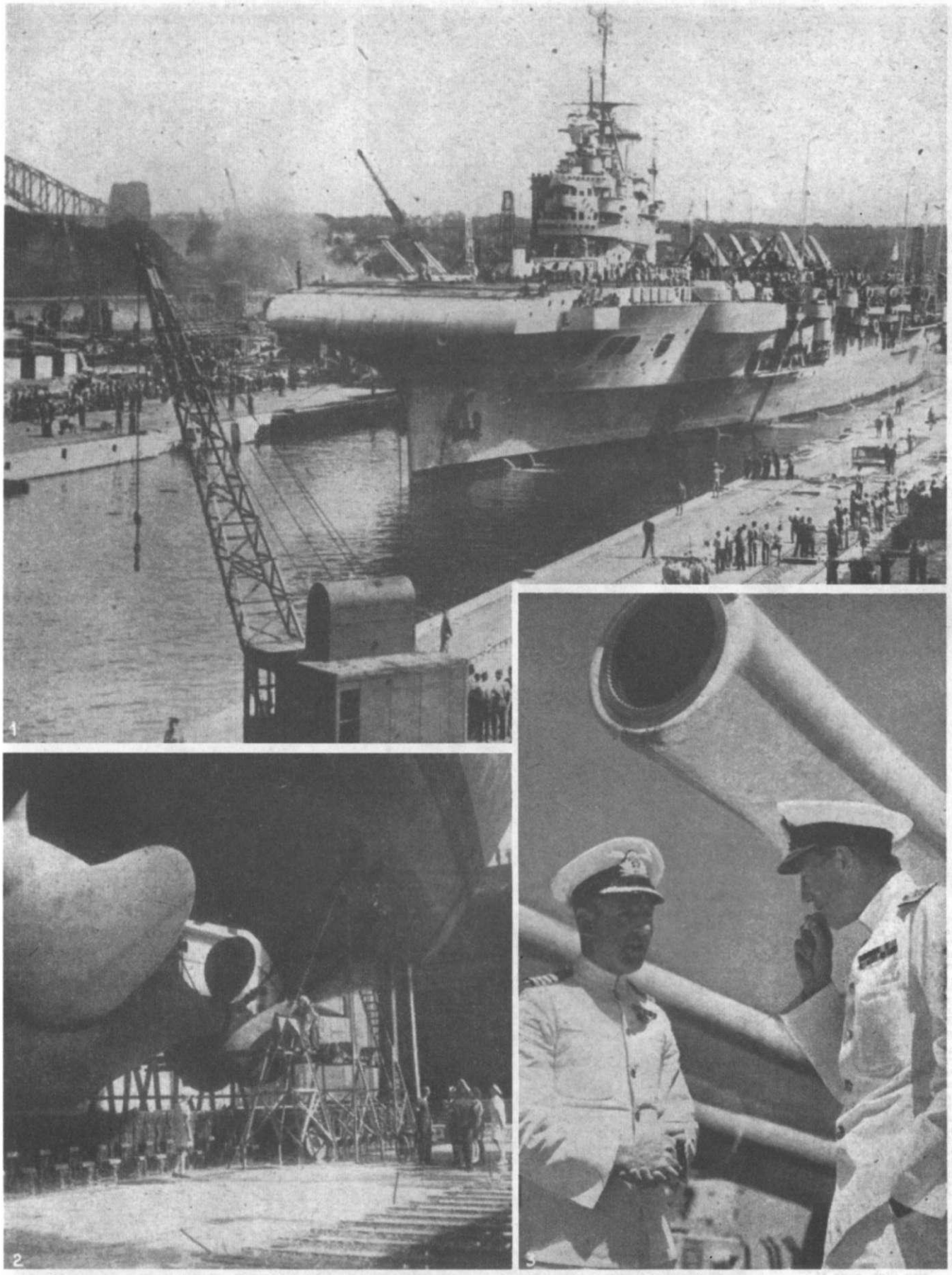


**VISTA OF U-BOATS ON THE STOCKS AT BREMEN was the satisfying sight which greeted this soldier of the 52nd Lowland Division after they had cleared the famous port on April 28, 1945. First U-boat to give itself up in British home waters, under the unconditional surrender terms, was U 249 which, flying the German naval ensign at half-mast with the British flag above it, sailed into Weymouth Bay on the morning of May 10.** *Photo, British Official*

After this the submarine wolf-packs concentrated as far as possible on the mid-Atlantic area, where there was a gap between the extreme ranges of aircraft operating from British, Newfoundland or American shore bases. To overcome this weakness, convoys were reinforced with escort aircraft carriers, whose planes were able to patrol the danger zone. Many a U-boat fell victim to this counterstroke, and in time it was proved that to attack a convoy was apt to be suicidal.

HITLER'S replacement of his Commander-in-Chief, Grossadmiral Raeder, by the U-boat specialist Dönitz was a fresh confession by the enemy that everything depended on the success of the U-boat campaign. Its failure has long been apparent to the world, for the Germans have never attempted to disprove the figures of their losses, amounting at the height of the conflict to a submarine every day. New devices such as the *Schnorkel*, or airpipe to enable a submarine to remain submerged for a much greater time, may have extended the lives of U-boats, but this has done no more than delay the inevitable end.

# From Her Decks Our Planes Can Strike Japan



**H.M.S. ILLUSTRIOUS ENTERED SYDNEY'S NEW GRAVING DOCK** for repairs (1) before the dock was officially opened by H.R.H. the Duke of Gloucester and named "Captain Cook" on March 24, 1945. The aircraft carrier's giant propellers (2). A carrier force led by the Illustrious, and a task force of the British Pacific Fleet, commanded by Vice-Admiral Sir Bernard Rawlings (3, right, seen with Capt. H. Howden, commanding H.M.A.S. Hobart), attacked, on March 26, the Sakishima Group. See illus. pages 582, 751, Vol. 8.



*Photos, Sport & General*

# Final Tragic Throw of the Dice for the Duce

**MUSSOLINI and his 25 years old mistress, Clara Petacci, and 12 members of his Cabinet, were executed by Italian partisans at a Lake Como village on April 28, 1945, after being arrested in an attempt to cross the Swiss frontier. The bodies were brought to Milan and exhibited to public view.**

**The ex-Duce and Signorina Petacci sprawled in death in Milan (1), and the crowds spat upon them. News of the execution was followed by an outburst among the population, who overthrew all the remaining statues of the ex-Duce: one was flung into a dog kennel (2). During the final hours in Milan these patriots picked off Fascist snipers (3). Troops of the U.S. 5th Army entered Genoa on April 27 after its liberation by partisans; jeep-riding American soldiers passed German prisoners (4).** **See also illus. page 34.**

*Photos, U.S. Official, Evening Standard, Keystone*

# Dramatic Last Days of the War in the West

With bated breath the civilized world awaited the final dissolution of the Third Reich, which Hitler had boasted was to endure 1,000 years. One by one, day by day, the ignoble figureheads in this tragedy of a nation passed from the limelight. To the inexorable demand of Unconditional Surrender the Realm of Germany drew violently to its close.

**APRIL 24, 1945.**—The rot sets in. The Reich is crumbling. At his own request Himmler, chief of the S.S. and C.-in-C. the Home Army, meets Count Folke Bernadotte of the International Red Cross, at the Baltic port of Luebeck, and expresses the wish to meet General Eisenhower, to surrender the whole Western Front. He admits that Germany is finished, and that Hitler is so ill that he might already be dead—in any case cannot live more than two days. Gen. Schillenburg, Hitler's confidential staff officer, declares the Fuehrer is suffering from brain haemorrhage but does not indicate his whereabouts.

Mr. Herschel Johnson, the American Minister to Sweden, and Sir Victor Mallet, the British Minister, are summoned by M. Guenther, the Swedish Foreign Minister, and informed of Himmler's overtures.

**APRIL 25.**—President Truman and Mr. Churchill discuss the offer and agree to notify Marshal Stalin that it is proposed to reject it and to tell Himmler that the only acceptable one will be unconditional surrender to Britain, the U.S.A. and Russia. Meanwhile, the Russians complete the encirclement of Berlin.

**APRIL 26.**—Marshal Stalin's reply received by Mr. Grew, U.S. Acting Secretary of State, thanks President Truman for the information and agrees to the proposed message. The President telegraphs the reply to the American Legation at Stockholm : insisting on unconditional surrender to all the three Governments on all fronts, that the German forces should surrender to local commanders in the field, and where resistance continued the Allied Armies would press the attack. On this date Russian and U.S. forces link up at Torgau on the Elbe. (See illus. p. 40.)

**APRIL 27.**—The U.S. Minister reports that Count Bernadotte has left for Flensburg, on the German-Danish Frontier, to take the message to Himmler. At night it is reported from Stockholm that the Count has returned there but that no reply has been received from Himmler—who is heard of no more in connexion with these negotiations.

**APRIL 28.**—In London a statement, drawn up by Mr. Churchill, comes from 10, Downing Street : " . . . At a time like this all kinds of proposals for German surrender from various parts of the German Reich are rife as these are in harmony with the enemy's desperate situation. His Majesty's Government have no information to give about any of them at this moment. But it must be emphasized that only unconditional surrender to the three major Powers will be entertained." Mussolini and members of the Fascist Cabinet are executed by Italian partisans at Lake Como. (See illus. p. 44.)

**APRIL 29.**—German Armies in N. Italy and W. Austria capitulate ; hostilities to cease on May 2. Hitler is reported dead in a suicide pact with Goebbels.

**APRIL 30.**—Russians capture ruins of the Reichstag in Berlin. Marshal Stalin, in an Order of the Day, says, " Seeking a way out of their hopeless plight, the Hitlerite adventurers resort to all kinds of tricks, down to flirting with the Allies in an effort to cause dissension in the Allied Camp. These fresh tricks are doomed to utter failure. They can only accelerate the disintegration of the German Army." (See illus. p. 41.)

**MAY 1.**—Count Bernadotte, expected in Stockholm today, had contact on April 29 (reports the London Times) with one of Himmler's representatives. " It is generally believed that if Himmler gave the order to lay down arms he would be obeyed by what remains of the Wehrmacht and the party formations of which he is head."

Hitler's death in Berlin is announced by Hamburg radio at 10.20 p.m.—" It is reported from the Fuehrer's Headquarters that our Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler, has fallen this afternoon at his command post in the Reich Chancellery, fighting to the last breath against Bolshevism and for Germany."

Admiral Dönitz goes to the microphone : " German men and women, soldiers of the Wehrmacht ! Our Fuehrer, Adolf Hitler, has fallen . . . The Fuehrer has appointed me as his successor. Fully conscious of the responsibility, I take over the leadership of the German people at this fateful hour. It is my first task to save the German people from destruction by the Bolshevists and it is only to achieve this that the fight continues. As long as the British and Americans hamper us from reaching this end we shall fight and defend ourselves against them as well . . ." An Order of the Day by Admiral Dönitz is then read : " The Fuehrer . . . died the death of a hero." Our 8th Army makes contact with Tito's Yugoslavs west of Trieste.

### THE PRIME MINISTER'S HISTORIC PEACE MESSAGE

*Extracts from the historic speech Mr. Churchill made to the world before the microphone, at 3 p.m. on May 8, 1945, and later repeated in the House of Commons :*

YESTERDAY morning, at 2.41 a.m., at General Eisenhower's headquarters, General Jodl, the representative of the German High Command and of Grand-Admiral Dönitz, the designated head of the German State, signed the act of unconditional surrender of all German land, sea and air forces in Europe to the Allied Expeditionary Force, and simultaneously to the Soviet High Command . . . Today, this agreement will be ratified and confirmed at Berlin . . .

Hostilities will end officially at one minute after midnight tonight (Tuesday, May 8), but, in the interests of saving lives, the Cease Fire began yesterday to be sounded all along the front, and our dear Channel Islands are also to be freed today . . .

We may allow ourselves a brief period of rejoicing, but let us not forget for a moment the toils and efforts that lie ahead. Japan, with all her treachery and greed, remains unsubdued. The injury she has inflicted upon Great Britain, the United States and other countries, and her detestable cruelties, call for justice and retribution.

We must now devote all our strength and resources to the completion of our tasks both at home and abroad. *Advance Britannia ! Long live the cause of freedom ! God save the King !*

**MAY 2.**—Gen. Eisenhower explodes the " death of a hero " fantasy. From the Headquarters of the Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Force comes the refutation, " Admiral Dönitz's statement that Hitler met a hero's death is in contradiction with the facts given by Himmler and Gen. Schillenburg . . . nothing which either Admiral Dönitz or Himmler may say or do can change in any way the agreed operations of the Allied Armies."

" Berlin has fallen ! " is announced from Moscow, the remnants of the defeated garrison surrendering to the Red Army at 2 p.m. British double summer time, after a battle which has lasted little more than a fortnight.

In Italy, at the same hour, nearly 1,000,000 men, comprising all enemy land, sea and air forces commanded by Gen. Vietinghoff-Scheel, cease fighting. This surrender of the whole of the German Armies in Italy and parts of Austria to Field-Marshal Alexander is the first made unconditionally in this war. The Baltic ports of Luebeck and Wismar fall to the British, Rostock and Warnemunde to the Russians. (See illus. p. 34.)

**MAY 3.**—The enemy collapses in Northern Germany and is surrendering in thousands. Hamburg is being occupied by the British 2nd Army.

**MAY 4.**—Field - Marshal Montgomery accepts surrender of German forces in Holland, North-West Germany and Denmark, including Heligoland and the Frisian Islands—" a battlefield surrender involving the forces now facing the 21st Army Group on their northern and western flanks." This is announced from Supreme Headquarters at 8.15 p.m., six weeks after the British crossing of the Rhine. The German plenipotentiaries who have arrived at Montgomery's camp at Luneburg Heath, south of Hamburg, to surrender include Admiral Von Friedeburg, C.-in-C. of the German Navy, who succeeded Admiral Dönitz in that post when Dönitz became the new Fuehrer, Gen. Dietel, and Rear-Admiral Wagner.

**MAY 5.**—Demoralization and disintegration of the enemy on the west front continues : on the south flank the German 1st and 19th Armies surrender to Gen. Devers.

**MAY 6.**—Admiral Dönitz, presumed to have fled to Norway, broadcasts to all German ships, " Crews of all ships flying the flag of the German Merchant Navy or the State service flag are to abstain from any act of war in the ports and waters affected by the truce. They are forbidden either to scuttle the ships themselves or to render them unserviceable. The crews will remain on board ship."

**MAY 7.**—The war in Europe is over. After five years and eight months "complete and crushing victory" has, in the words of H.M. The King, crowned Britain's unrelenting struggle against Nazi Germany. Germany has surrendered unconditionally to Great Britain, the United States and Russia, at 2.41 a.m. in the technical college at Rheims, where Gen. Eisenhower has his headquarters. Gen. Bedell Smith, Gen. Eisenhower's Chief of Staff, signed for the Supreme Allied Command; Gen. Ivan Susloparov for Russia; Gen. François Sevez for France. Acting jointly on behalf of Adml. Dönitz as head of the Reich, the German delegates were Adml. Hans George Von Friedeburg, C.-in-C. the German Navy, and Col.-Gen. Gustav Jodl, Chief of Staff of the Wehrmacht. Signing for Germany, Jodl said, "With this signature the German people and armed forces are, for better or worse, delivered into the victors' hands."

**MAY 8.**—This is V-Day, together with tomorrow a national holiday. Tremendous scenes of rejoicing in London begin in the afternoon with the Prime Minister's announcement of the end of hostilities (see panel in this page).

**MAY 9.**—Germans have signed capitulation in Berlin, Moscow radio announces shortly after one a.m. (B.D.S.T.). It states, "The German High Command will immediately issue orders to all forces on sea, land and air under the German High Command to cease military operations after 11.01 p.m. (Moscow time)." The announcement added that the capitulation was signed by. Field-Marshal Keitel, commanding all the German armed forces, Adml. Von Friedeburg, and Gen. Stumpf, commanding the Luftwaffe, in the presence of Marshal Zhukov, commanding the Russian forces in the field, and Air Chief Marshal Tedder, Allied Deputy Supreme C.-in-C.

# Fleet Air Arm Service Under the Red Ensign

Urgent need arose for aircraft carriers of a new type, to safeguard our lifelines and protect officers and men of the Merchant Navy. How British tankers and grain-ships were ingeniously adapted to serve this purpose whilst still functioning as freighters, with F.A.A. personnel aboard, is told by Capt. FRANK H. SHAW. See also illus. page 615, Vol. 8.

It used to be a commonplace in the Merchant Navy that if you called down a ship's engine room skylight: "Are you there, Mac?" a Scots voice was certain to reply, "Ay, I'm here!" Today the title has another significance, though no doubt the majority of merchant aircraft carriers (M.A.C. for short) are of Scots origin, the Clyde shipbuilding yards being mainly responsible for their production.

The M.A.C. is a natural development of the Catafighter-carrying freighter (see page 214, Vol. 8). I have seen Hurricane fighters catapult off from tankers in convoy and engage long-range enemy bombers in mid-Atlantic with satisfactory results; but the limitations of such air defence were obvious, as the aircraft concerned had the brief life of a moth. They shot up, they fought desperately and, even when victorious, were compelled to sacrifice themselves by crashing into the sea, the pilots parachuting clear to be picked up by escorting destroyers. What was needed, plainly, was a type of ship from which the aircraft could take-off and to which, duty completed, they could return for further service. The merchant aircraft carrier supplied the effective answer.

A "Woolworth carrier" (see illus. page 104, Vol. 7) is a warship. She flies the White Ensign, is manned by naval personnel, and must be ready to take part in any operations deemed necessary. It was this need for ubiquity on the part of the pocket-carriers that brought the M.A.C. into service. The Murmansk convoys were a thorn in Germany's flesh. Consequently every effort was made by the Norwegian-based Luftwaffe to destroy the armadas on which Russia relied. The Woolworth carriers embodied themselves in these vital convoys and defeated the enemy's plans, but by doing so left the Atlantic convoys—equally vital to Allied survival—more or less unguarded for a gap of five hundred miles in mid-ocean.

And the Catafighters were not protection enough. Fleet carriers were too important—and in too short supply—to be thus utilized. Enemy U-boats were reported to carry aircraft—more, perhaps, for spotting convoys than for direct attack; but attacks were made by such wasps in mid-sea. Our invaluable convoys could not be left to the protection of anti-aircraft fire, good and improving though it was.

It was a simpler matter to adapt certain types of merchantmen than to build new carriers in the numbers requisite to afford sufficient protection. Not that such adaptation was easy. The average merchantman is designed for carrying, and working, cargo. That means the provision of many wide hatches, of derrick-bearing masts, Samson-posts, winches and the like; all obstacles to maintaining a clear unbroken deck such as aircraft require for taking-off and landing. If such impedimenta were removed, it meant that the freighter's usefulness as a cargo-carrier was destroyed or severely handicapped. The questions of funnels and engine-room superstructures could be overcome—there were motor-ships in plenty, requiring no funnels, only escape-pipes over the stern. There was the business of the navigating bridge, of course; but when steam replaced sail the point of command was shifted from the poop aft to the Monkey Island amidships.

Tankers and grain-carriers supplied the solution (see illus. page 615, Vol. 8). These vessels required no complicated gear to handle their freights, oil could be shipped or discharged by pipes shackled on to connexions practically anywhere. Grain in bulk is normally pumped out into the receptive elevators. It can be shipped by a canvas hosepipe pouring a powerful stream downwards. Wide hatches are unnecessary.

Masts, derricks, winches were all redundant to such craft. These long-waisted, ugly ships were ideal for the purpose, except as regards size. The maximum length of flight deck attainable was roughly 400 feet. But Fleet Air Arm pilots are accustomed to taking risks. At a height, the deck of even a 27,000-ton Fleet carrier looks minute in its framing of boisterous sea. Not that 400 feet affords much of a run when taking off! But as the F.A.A. pilots didn't object—who could? It was their lives with which the gamble was made.

**THE M.A.C. ANCYLUS, a British merchant ship equipped with flight deck for the launching and landing-on of Fleet Air Arm fighter aircraft during the most critical period of the Battle of the Atlantic, as described by Capt. Frank H. Shaw in this page.** *Photo, British Official*

Flight decks were consequently superimposed on selected tankers and grain-carriers. The navigating bridges were shifted to the side of the top deck. This gave the craft a lopsided, unsightly appearance, but a ship could be as ugly as sin so long as she performed her designed function. The M.A.C. came into being soon after the theory was advanced, for Clyde shipbuilders can make even the most fantastic dream come true.

It must be stressed that the conception of the M.A.C. was for defence only. The ships were to fly the peaceful Red Ensign. Registered as men-of-war they would not be permitted by International Law to remain in a neutral port for longer than 24 hours. But they were to carry cargoes, the loading and discharge of which would occupy much more time than 24 hours. Still, "Defence" is capable of wide interpretation.

To attack an enemy aircraft before it can deliver its own attack on peaceful merchantmen is defence, authorized by law. To dive on a surfacing U-boat about to torpedo a convoy is also defence. These considerations being taken into account, the merchant ship role was quite permissible. But the F.A.A. personnel, the pilots, navigators, riggers, and engineers, were naval as to one hundred per cent. Thus the paradox came about of commissioned officers serving under Red Ensign captains, being amenable to Red Ensign discipline. The Junior Service for once outranked the Senior! Yet contentment and happiness resulted. It meant adaptation, certainly; but the F.A.A. is in the main recruited from "hostilities only" men, who are not steeped in the Royal Navy's hoary traditions. The resultant liaison between Red and White Ensigns was a happy omen for the future.

The smaller the ship the more boisterous she becomes in a sea-way. A 10,000-ton tanker can be tossed about like a cockboat in an Atlantic storm; the U-boats preferred plenty of white-caps on the water when they closed in to attack. Such waves hide the feather of the periscope and the track of the hurrying torpedo. It is impossible to give adequate praise to the daring young flying-men of the F.A.A. No weather conditions appalled them when taking-off or landing-on the miniature flight decks. Often those decks were slanted at a forty-five degree angle, and washed by sluicing brine. True, they were fitted with trip-wires to bring alighting fighters up short; but the take-off run could be very precarious.

During the ocean crossing aircraft from the M.A.C.s maintained a tireless overhead patrol. Especially was this so when crossing the great gap; for though our giant bombers can cross the Atlantic in one furious hop, they cannot carry fuel enough to permit of giving continuous cover to the ships they sight beneath them. The weather was foul indeed that kept the M.A.C. airmen "grounded." Whether the aircraft were fitted with rockets capable of sinking a U-boat outright is a State secret. But the best way to defend a convoy is to sink the predatory submarines stalking it. True, an unarmed aircraft could spot U-boats and direct the attention of the surface escort to them; but when the relative speeds of aircraft and destroyers are taken into account, it will be seen that the former is peculiarly adapted to deliver shattering blows whilst the enemy is still remote from his target.

It can readily be imagined how cordial a welcome was offered to these new sea monsters by the men of the Merchant Navy. The conviction was drilled into these—often sceptical—"toughs" that the Admiralty was determined to give them maximum protection. That is why, when at a Master's conference the Commodore of Convoy announced that an M.A.C. or two would sponsor the armada on its eastward run, every shipmaster present got to his feet and cheered himself hoarse.

Just how much farther the development of this peculiar type of winged freighter will go it is difficult to estimate. Imagination pictures liners of the future equipped with flight decks from which passengers can take-off to effect a rendezvous ahead of the parent ship's arrival in port. Delayed passengers will be able to join ship far out at sea. Cases of illness can be transported to a hospital ashore with minimum delay. But the future will take care of itself.

*Photos, Keystone*

## *On Hitler's Birthday Nemesis Came to Nuremberg*

Medieval city of Bavaria, where in the great Zeppelin Stadium the Fuehrer was wont to rant at the annual Nazi party congress; Nuremberg was entered by the U.S. 7th Army on April 16, 1945. Fierce fighting went on until the 20th (his 56th birthday) when the Stars and Stripes fluttered over the Adolf Hitler Platz and the Stadium (top) stood desolate save for a disabled Allied tank and two jeeps. At the same time our armour moved into the old walled inner city (bottom).

## *British Bid for Nazi Ports in Full Swing—*

Nearing Bremen, tanks of the Coldstream Guards fired into woods where the enemy were still holding out (1); the city fell to the 52nd (Lowland) Division on April 27, 1945. Previously Verden, S.E. of Bremen, had been taken by Royal Scots Fusiliers; troops bringing in prisoners on a Bren carrier (2). South of Hamburg, Uelzen was cleared by men of the 15th Scottish Division: a bombed German oil train was still burning when Stederdorf, beyond Uelzen, was entered (3).

*Photos, British Official, Associated Press*

## *—As War Flames Flicker Out in the West*

One of the last strongholds in Leipzig to hold out (April 19) was the huge monument commemorating the defeat of Napoleon in 1813, garrisoned by 150 fanatics with ammunition and foodstuffs sufficient for three months. After bombardment by U.S. 1st Army artillery, American infantry moved up to accept the surrender; white flags flutter above (4). The naval base of Buxtehude, Hamburg, was taken by British forces on April 22; garrison troops after their mass surrender (5).

## *Starvation and Torture Behind Barbed Wire*

*Photos, British and U.S. Official, Central Press*

Revolting details came to light in the overrunning by the Allies of huge concentration camps in Germany. At Belsen, 60,000 disease-ridden civilian prisoners had been without water for six days; under compulsion, S.S. guards removed bodies for burial (1). At Gardelegen, carrying crosses prepared by themselves under Allied orders, Germans marched to a burial site (2). At Buchenwald (3) British M.P.s saw pitiful victims. British P.O.W.s at Stalag 11B greet their liberators (4).

# VIEWS & REVIEWS

Of Vital War Books

by Hamilton Fyfe

# Underground Patriots at Work in Poland

IF a butcher said to a customer in Warsaw while the Nazis were in occupation of the city, "Put your steak on ice directly you get home," the customer knew there was a secret newspaper, printed by the Underground Movement, inside the meat parcel. Or perhaps newsboys would be shouting at street corners, "Latest news! Great German victories!" which told passers-by who loathed the Germans that within the Nazi sheet was a copy of the Voice of Poland or Polish Freedom. With the production of these journals a Mr. Jan Karski was concerned. He tells about them and many other Underground activities in his country in Story of a Secret State (Hodder and Stoughton, 7s. 6d.), which gives the best account I have seen anywhere of what Polish patriots did to outwit Germans, to keep alive the national spirit, and to prepare for the establishment of a genuinely democratic system.

Mr. Karski's story begins with the last gay days in Warsaw, before the invasion began on September 1, 1939. A week before that, surprise and some anxiety were caused by the issue of mobilization orders, but the general feeling was one of utterly foolish optimism. Mr. Karski reports a remark by the major of the battery to which he belonged: "England and France are not needed this time. We can finish this alone." An official high up in the civil service, familiar with "well-informed circles," declared that "Hitler was bluffing." As soon as the Nazis saw the Poles were strong, united and prepared, they would back down. With such poisonous soothing syrup the nation was dosed. The collapse of their army and the widespread bombing of their homes plunged most of them into hopeless despair. They have never forgotten how they were deceived then, and with what disastrous consequences. That is why the remnants of the old ruling classes are distrusted.

General Sikorski, Polish Prime Minister and C.-in-C., whose death in an aircraft accident near Gibraltar on July 4, 1943, was most unfortunate for Poland and the world, understood this well. He told Mr. Karski that the past could not be recreated. "Our pre-war rulers," he said, "thought that Poland should develop, not according to democratic ideals, but through the so-called 'strong hand system.' The men responsible for that cannot come to power again. Post-war Poland will not be built up again by any privileged group. It must be a free democratic state."

## Someone Might Crack Under Torture

By the Underground activities foundations were actually laid for parliamentary government. The leaders met together and debated; they were a national assembly in miniature. But they met always under the shadow of death. Work in the Underground Movement meant suffering constant tension, never-relaxing alertness to possible dangers.

> No one could ever tell when a leak might occur, when someone who had been caught might have cracked under torture, so that one's identity and the address to which one was going might become known to the Gestapo.

Those who were engaged in printing the secret newspapers were often surprised by the police. If knocking brought nobody to the door, grenades were thrown through windows, machine-gun bullets sprayed into the house. Survivors, if captured, were shot. So were the owners of the house, and sometimes those of neighbouring houses as well. Yet there never seems to have been any lack of people—women as frequently as men—to carry on. Women, says Mr. Karski,

> despite the world-wide opinion that they are loquacious and indiscreet, are on the whole, better conspiratorial workers than men . . . quicker to perceive danger and less inclined to avoid thinking about misfortunes. They are indubitably superior at being inconspicuous, and generally display much caution, discretion, and common sense . . . Men are often prone to exaggeration and bluff, are unwilling to face reality, and in most cases are subconsciously inclined to surround themselves with an air of mystery that sooner or later proves fatal.

That, the author might have added, applies especially to excitable, romantically minded, emotionally effervescent Polish men. But, though he does not say it bluntly, he lets it be seen plainly enough. Still, there were sufficient workers with Mr. Karski who, like him, were calm and not in the least theatrical. They carried on their activities by the simplest, most prosaic methods. The greatest law of underground work is 'Be inconspicuous.' The quality we valued more highly than any other was the ability to melt into the landscape, to seem humdrum and ordinary." Many people suppose that anti-Nazi plotters met usually at night in eerie surroundings, illumination being supplied be flickering candles, the conspirators wearing masks and speaking in whispers. Nothing could be further from the truth. The motion pictures I have seen and the fiction I have read about the Underground in Europe have invariably been products of purely sensational imagination."

Mr. Karski, by the way, declines to believe in the existence of any widespread or vigorous Underground plotting in Germany.

> I have come to know Nazi Germany rather well from many angles during this war. I have had occasion to travel in the Reich and I have never encountered a trace of any important movement hostile to the Nazi regime . . . I believe that all accounts of such movements are either pure fiction or wishful exaggeration.

**POLISH PATRIOT FIGHTER exemplified on the military side the courage and resource of those whose desperately heroic struggles are described in the book reviewed here.**
*Photo, Keystone*

It was his employment as a courier to keep the Polish Government in London in contact with the patriots in Poland that gave him an insight into what was going on in Germany. He was lucky enough only to be caught once by the Gestapo, who applied their usual barbaric methods to him, but let him slip through their fingers. He had at the beginning of the war an experience as prisoner in Russian hands. He contrasts the behaviour of Soviet soldiers with that of the Germans. "They were lenient, within the limits of military discipline. I never saw a Russian guard strike or curse at a prisoner, no matter how enraged he might become. The worst threat they ever employed was the standard, 'Quiet, or you'll be sent to Siberia!' They knew Siberia had been a Polish bugaboo for generations." It was where the Tsars used to send Poles who struggled against their tyranny.

The Tsars failed to Russianize Poland as signally as the Germans failed to Prussianize the country. In Posen "everything possible was done to spread German influence and culture" from the time of Frederick the Great Scoundrel. Bismarck tried to turn the Polish farmers into serfs. When the independence of Poland was restored in 1919 "every vestige of German influence disappeared." There were, however, a good many Poles who unfortunately decided to Nazify themselves when the Germans once more terrorized the country.

## Quislings Liquidated Without Mercy

In the book there is an account of the execution of one such renegade. He was found hanging to the branch of a tree, with a letter sticking out of his pocket which said he had repented of acting as a Nazi spy. He had, of course, been hanged by Poles, and no doubt the Germans knew this. But they had to keep it quiet. Though they gave out that the man had gone mad, the incident had its effect; it made them more jumpy and it made the peasants think that if the spy had lost faith in the enemy, the hated Huns could not be as strong as was supposed.

Polish "quislings" who attempted to give active aid to the Nazis or who were proved to have put obstacles in the way of Underground workers were sentenced to death and "liquidated" without mercy. Others who had merely failed to behave stiffly and coldly towards Germans were summoned by the secret court of justice and asked to justify their conduct if they could. They were usually pronounced "infamous," which meant that they were boycotted socially and held liable to have criminal proceedings taken against them after the war.

HATRED of such "vermin" increased as living conditions became harder. In 1942 prices of bread and potatoes were thirty times as high as they had been three years before; bacon cost sixty times as much. The Underground workers fared no better than the rest of the population. For twelve months Mr. Karski tasted neither butter nor sugar. "A plate of cereal a day was considered a luxury. We were all hungry nearly all the time." The result was that "any trick to get more food was moral." A priest, for instance, "dug up two birth certificates of dead babies born about twenty-eight years before, and I managed to obtain two more fake identity papers and ration cards." His papers were always fakes while he worked Underground, and they had to be changed often. The number of disguises he assumed while he was on his final journey to London make up a most amusing story.

After this adventure he was taken off active service and sent to the United States as a kind of unofficial ambassador. There he wrote this book, as is made plain by the American terms he uses, such as "bills" (currency notes), and "dry goods store."

# 'Architects of Better World' at San Francisco

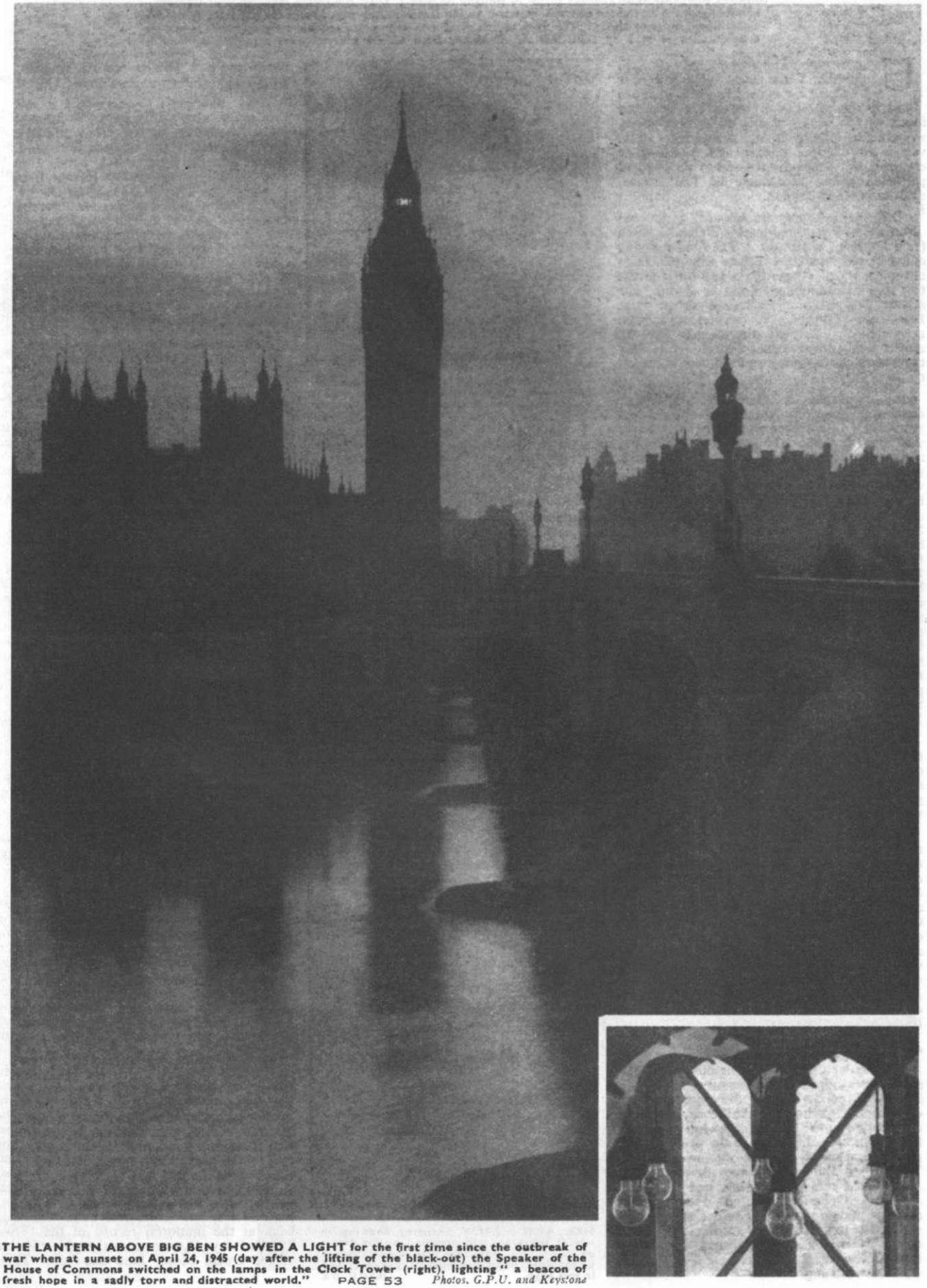
CONFERENCE OF ALLIED NATIONS at San Francisco—to establish "a general international organization to maintain peace and security"—was first mooted in the joint statement issued at the conclusion of the Crimea Conference in February 1945 (see pages 682-683, Vol. 8). Held in the city's new Opera House, the Conference was opened by an address broadcast from Washington by President Truman in which he designated the delegates as "architects of the better world." All the United Nations were represented, with the exception of Poland—about the formation of whose new Government the Western Allies and the U.S.S.R. were still deliberating when the Conference opened. At the first session, as the delegates took their seats in the stalls, arc-lamps for the cine-cameras were focused on the stage, where the flags of the Allied Nations hung. A band played "The World is Waiting for the Sunrise," whereupon U.S. soldiers and Servicewomen marched on to the stage to stand to attention, while Mr. Edward Stettinius, Jnr., U.S. Secretary of State, took his seat. Then delegates heard the President speak from Washington by radio.

**MEETING PLACE OF THE ALLIED NATIONS' HISTORIC CONFERENCE** which opened on April 25, 1945—the Opera House, San Francisco (1). Contrasts in oratory: Mr. Anthony Eden, Britain's Foreign Minister (2), and Mr. Molotov, Soviet Foreign Commissar (3). The brilliant opening scene (4); against a background of 46 Allied flags, and men and women representatives of the U.S. armed forces, sat Mr. E. R. Stettinius, Jnr., U.S. Secretary of State (2nd from right, on dais). See also page 63.



*Photos, British and U.S. Official, British Combine Photos, Black Star*

# 'Beacon of Fresh Hope in a Sadly Torn World'



**THE LANTERN ABOVE BIG BEN SHOWED A LIGHT** for the first time since the outbreak of war when at sunset on April 24, 1945 (day after the lifting of the black-out) the Speaker of the House of Commons switched on the lamps in the Clock Tower (right), lighting " a beacon of fresh hope in a sadly torn and distracted world."



*Photos, G.P.U. and Keystone*

# Tremendous Struggle of the Heroic Netherlands

With the surrender of all German forces in Holland on May 4, 1945, the Dutch regained their freedom after five years of enemy occupation. One of their most valiant struggles against this Nazi tyranny had its inception on the eve of Arnhem, when 30,000 Dutch railwaymen obeyed the official Netherlands Government order to strike. The story of this great and long-sustained blow against the foe and its consequences is told by HAROLD A. ALBERT, from official sources. See also p. 780, Vol. 8.

UNESCORTED Lancasters of R.A.F. Bomber Command, flying low over Holland on April 29, 1945, dropped food to the starving people of the occupied western districts. Sacks containing meat, vegetables, flour, milk, margarine, dried eggs, sugar, tea, cheese and yeast—even pepper, salt and mustard—were dropped at airfields and a racecourse at The Hague, Rotterdam and Leyden.

Before the Lancasters set out, a message from SHAEF was broadcast in Dutch, German and English. It stated: "The food-carrying aircraft will first drop bright coloured flares to guide them. These flares will burst in the air and will be coloured red or green. The flares will make a distinctive noise while they are falling." A second broadcast announced: "Allied aircraft are now on their way. The next aircraft you hear overhead will be carrying food, not bombs."

The International Red Cross had previously contacted the Germans in Holland, and were given an assurance that the planes would not be attacked provided they kept to an agreed route. This R.A.F. operation, unique in the history of Bomber Command, was followed on May 1 by an announcement from SHAEF that a meeting between Allied and German representatives (the former headed by Lieut.-Gen. W. B. Smith, Chief of Staff to Gen. Eisenhower, the Germans by the notorious Austrian quisling Seyss-Inquart, Reichskommissar for the Netherlands) had been held to arrange for importation of food into N.W. Holland not only by air but by sea and road. By air, ten dropping zones were agreed, for use from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily. By sea, foodships to enter Rotterdam, the Germans to meet them at a prearranged rendezvous and guarantee safe conduct to port. One main road was made available, the supply scheduled to start on May 2 with 1,000 tons.

Behind all this there lies one of the most stirring chapters of the war—the story of how 6,000,000 Dutch civilians stood shoulder to shoulder in support of a sustained great strike while Allied armies fought their way to final victory.

On the evening of Sept. 17, 1944, the day that the Dakotas and Horsa gliders spilled their loads around Arnhem, an official announcement was broadcast to the people of Holland that the Netherlands Government after consultation with the Allied High Command deemed the moment had come to call a general strike of all railway workers, and 30,000 railwaymen promptly stopped work. Six-and-a-half months later the strike was still 100 per cent complete. And in early April 1945, when many of the Nazis were on the run no Dutch railwayman lifted a finger to speed the parting pests.

THE strike was total, nation-wide. At zero hour, drivers left their trains standing; signalmen walked out of their boxes; booking clerks and station-masters left their offices. Even the railway directors left their desks and their homes. And every manjack had to go into hiding, knowing that the penalty, if caught, would be the firing squad. Then thousands of factory workers in Amsterdam and other centres downed tools and walked out in sympathy, and remained absent. Operatives closed down power stations and repair shops rather than assist the Nazis in any degree during the bitter fight for the Lower Rhine, and the results were far-reaching.

**BOMB-BAYS OF A LANCASTER** being loaded with sacks of food for the starving Dutch—enough to provide a balanced ration for over 3,000 people for a day. *Photo, Keystone*

If the Germans could have made use of the Dutch railways during the critical second half of September 1944, for instance, the struggle for the bridge across the Waal might not have been decided in favour of the Allies, and the British 2nd Army might perhaps have been held at Nijmegen. If the railways had been working efficiently as late as April this year, Field-Marshal Montgomery might have been delayed in his push beyond the Rhine.

Instead, Reich German railway staff had to deplete the already tenuous manpower of German lines to clear the Dutch main lines of goods trains which had come to a standstill and to operate the few military trains that circulated. The imported railwaymen were unfamiliar with the Dutch signalling system—itself now liable to sabotage—and the trains had to run "on sight," crawling from point to point and presenting an easy target to Allied aircraft. The points had to be operated by hand, and military trains took twelve hours to complete the 23-minute run from Amersfoort to Utrecht. Eventually this was "improved" to four hours, and the 20-minute Utrecht-Amsterdam journey—so vital to V-supplies—was "reduced" to three hours. But for the strike, obviously

**HOLLAND and N.W. Germany, showing (in white) the areas still occupied by the Nazis on May 1, 1945, when food was being delivered by the Allies to the Dutch civilians as described in this page.**

many more V-bombs carried on this line would have fallen on southern England.

The Germans alternately cajoled, threatened, and tried reprisals in attempts to make the strikers return. They offered coal-trains in return for co-operation, and the Dutch refused, preferring to shiver through one of the bitterest winters Europe has ever known. In Utrecht, headquarters of the Dutch rail administration, the Occupation authorities offered double wages and double rations to strike-breakers, a powerful inducement in a land reduced to direst poverty and hunger. Although 1,000 railway families lived in the town only four men came forward, and these were Dutch Nazis. In the whole of Holland only fifty Dutch Nazis offered to perform blackleg work.

Some resistance leaders were captured and shot, and many strikers' families were seized as hostages. Others saw their homes destroyed, their furniture confiscated. It made no difference. The strikers of course drew no official pay and none were allowed rations. The contingency was foreseen and provided against by the strike-leaders, and thousands of key men—traffic controllers and dispatchers, locomotivemen, signalmen and shunters—were allocated their hiding places weeks before Arnhem.

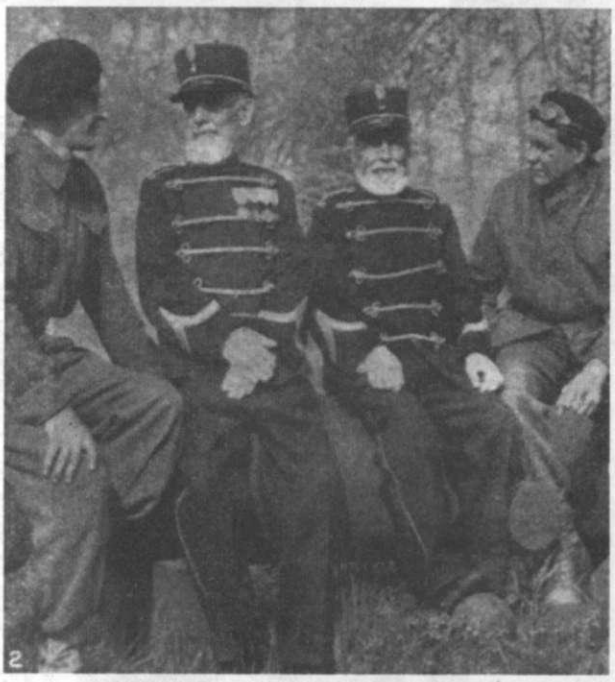
THE hiding places had to be secure against prying eyes. One man lived with eight others in a secret cellar under a barn; another spent four weeks in a cupboard. Forty families from Oldenzaal took to the woods with their children and lived in tents until better quarters could be found. "One half of occupied Holland was in hiding—the other half kept it hidden!" That is how a Dutch transport official described the situation to me. And he added, "many were living on the ration cards of the rest."

After twenty days the Germans once again tried to induce the railwaymen to give in, by promising that no action would be taken against them and that coal and food would be available for the population. By now the Allied setback at Arnhem (see page 366, Vol. 8) had become known, the future was uncertain, and strikers and supporters alike could foresee only grave consequences for their own people. From Radio Orange, however, came the call for the stoppage to go on, and there was no wavering.

Normally, Holland's food supplies were transported in barges and lorries; railways conveyed only a small proportion. Now the unscrupulous enemy confiscated lorries and barges and stole most of the remaining food stocks as part of a deliberate policy, and blamed the famine upon the strikers. But public opinion remained unaltered. Upon the walls of Rotterdam and the Hague appeared a slogan that proclaimed the motif of the struggle, "To the end, now!"

By April this year, British and Canadian troops had liberated north-east Holland and cut the escape-route of the Germans left in the west; but the trickle of food from the north-eastern provinces to the west was also abruptly cut off. The German flooding of the rich farmlands south and east of Amsterdam and of the great north-west polder rendered the plight of the Dutch in The Hague, Utrecht, Amsterdam and Rotterdam still more desperate. But the strike still held. Looking back at the immortal record of the "two hundred days," we can see that the suffering of the Dutch people bore due fruit. Their

# Cheers for the 1st Canadian Army in Holland



**WEST OF FAMOUS ARNHEM,** inhabitants of the Netherlands town of Ede (1) acclaimed Yorkshire troops of the British 49th Division, fighting as part of the 1st Canadian Army, as they rode in on April 17. Also near Arnhem, two young Canadians talked (2) with veterans from the famous 17th-century Bronbeek Institute for Netherlands Colonial Soldiers where the Dutch tricolour was flown for the first time since May 10, 1940 (see also facing page).

Inside Germany, police—the only enemy officials allowed to wear uniform—passed a Canadian provost in Meppen (3), on the Dortmund-Ems canal, captured on April 9 by the 4th Canadian Division. Dutch nurses and patients at a hospital near Otterloo, ten miles north-west of Arnhem (4), cheered when troops of the 1st Canadian Army on April 17 captured the village after fierce fighting in which a Canadian H.Q. staff took part.

*Photos, British and Canadian Official, Planet News*

**THE FAMOUS AVA BRIDGE AT SAGAING, NEAR MANDALAY,** in Burma—one of the world's biggest—partly demolished by our troops during the 1942 retreat, was retaken on March 17, 1945, by a patrol of the Royal Worcester Regiment and a mixed striking force of all-Indian troops aided by Burmese irregulars. After its capture, troops and transport of the 14th Army stand by at a bridge-head alongside (1). A zig-zag catwalk (2) was the sole link across the shattered section of the bridge which was the only road-rail structure spanning the Irrawaddy. A 25-pounder of the 36th Division (3) laid a protective barrage for troops crossing the Shweli River north-east of Myok (taken on March 20). Commanding the 26th Division, Maj.-Gen. C. E. N. Lomax watched Rajputs embark at Ramree (4). *Photos, British Official*

# I WAS THERE! Eye Witness Stories of the War

## *How East and West Met at Torgau on the Elbe*

Russian and American forces "officially" made contact when on April 26, 1945, units of the two Armies shook hands. By that union of Eastern and Western Allies Germany had been cut in two. Stanley Baron, News Chronicle war correspondent with Koniev's 1st Ukrainian Army, tells of the wild day that followed a fantastic night. See also illus. page 40.

SEC.-LT. William D. Robertson, of Los Angeles and the Headquarters C.O. of the First Battalion of the 273rd Infantry, U.S. 69th Division, looks at the moment like being officially credited as the first man to shake hands with a soldier of Koniev's First Ukrainian Army, but I do not suppose we shall ever be sure. This has been a wild day following a fantastic night, during which at least a couple of rival claims to be first in, the field, have come in from two different places.

All I am personally certain of is that I am here in the mess hall of a German barracks with the Elbe flowing fast about 250 yards behind, that I have just had lunch and drunk "victory and death to the Fascist invader" with the cropped-headed commander of the 173rd Regiment of the Ukrainian 58th (Honour Guard) Division, that Torgau, once the location of one of the biggest stalags in Germany, with thousands of British prisoners, is now an empty shell behind me with scarcely half a dozen Germans showing their heads, and that the American front lines are 25 miles to the rear.

**AT ANOTHER ELBE CROSSING, troops of the U.S. 9th Army at the southern end of their line scrambled across a pontoon bridge to shake the hands of the Russians on the east bank. In the foreground, right, is a Red Army woman interpreter.** *Photo, Pictorial Press*

### Jeep Out on a Lonely Sortie

I came into Torgau this morning with a platoon of riflemen, the second to cross no man's land after Robertson's jeep, out on a lonely sortie, had made one contact at 4.20 last night. We drove into the market square—I shall go back to the journey in a minute—and found it completely empty. For a minute we circled round. Then from under an arch walked three Russian soldiers, Lt. Ivan Feodor Kuzminski, Pte. Peter Melehen, and another. They paused, and then they ran with arms outstretched, grabbing at any American's hand they could see.

KUZMINSKI spun round with a G.I. Joe clutching each hand. They thumped each other on the back. We all wrung hands. We all thumped. If there had been any lurking suspicion that any political decision on zones of interest would get in the way of our rapture at this meeting, it was gone in a second. We were allies, we met and rejoiced, and I can think of nothing so exciting, so warm, so human as this encounter in this alien square. Kuzminski began to make a little speech, but it was drowned in exclamations and shouts. Out came the cameras for the inevitable arm-in-arm pictures. Then we saw a couple of Russian fighter planes weaving overhead.

Kuzminski pointed out the road to the river, and we drove on down the street past the Rose Gasthaus, set on fire by shelling when Koniev's men arrived on the opposite bank on Tuesday, and still flaming. There ahead was the Elbe, 100 yards wide and flowing fast, both girder bridges north and south down in the river, and the ancient castle, with a hole in its roof, rising up to the right of the cobbled quay. Here I will insert a little bit of story about that castle, as it was told to me last midnight by Sec.-Lt. Robertson when he got back to the U.S. 69th Division command post with the three Russian officers whom he had brought along, Maj. Anaphim Larinov, Capt. Vassili Petrovich Nedov and Lt. Alexander Silvacho—the first man from the east to enter our lines.

Robertson's mission had been to go out with Cpl. James McDonnell and Ptes. Paul Staub and Frank Huff in an armed jeep from the First Army's bridge-head over the River Mulde at Wuerzen, east of Leipzig, to help bring some sort of order into the masses of German refugees streaming in from the east, with liberated prisoners of war and German soldiers by the thousand, hurrying to give themselves up to the Americans. His surprise was all his own when he found himself 25 miles eastward in Torgau. Robertson said:

I had just found 30 Allied prisoners in a barracks, when some Krauts came up and said the Russians were just over the river. I got out of the jeep and went down on foot with a white flag to a big castle in the town. Other Krauts said the Russians were 500 yards away over the river. I broke into a drug-store, found some paint, painted the white flag with U.S. red stripes on blue field, went up to the top of the castle tower and began to wave and shout—"Tovarich Kamerad!"

**BEFORE THE "OFFICIAL" LINK-UP, these men of the U.S. 69th Division claim to have made the first contact with Soviet Forces near Torgau—on April 25, 1945. Sec.-Lieut. W. D. Robertson (second from right) tells his story in this page.** *Photo, Associated Press*

The Russians on the other side bellowed something back to me, but I don't understand Russian. Then they fired up two coloured flares. I hollered that I hadn't got any flares, but apparently they got tired of listening, or thought I was a German, so they fired a couple of anti-tank gun shells. I came down and found a Russian prisoner to tell them who I was, and after that everything was friendly. Once across the river we sat round saying: "Hi, there!" and smiling at each other and drinking toasts. Then three Russian officers with Pte. Nikolai Andreev climbed on the jeep, one on the bumper, one on the bonnet and the other inside, and here we are.

UNDER their eyes, waiting at the river edge, to cross by skiffs, were hundreds of their fellow-people who have been taken into slavery. For 25 miles I passed them on this extraordinary journey. Most jogged along in high-sided farm carts, some drawn by oxen, some by horses, in an apparently endless cavalcade which, by this time, had little interruption to fear from Germans trying to escape from north to south through the slender corridor which was still technically enemy-occupied territory.

Some flew white flags, and were obviously nervous as we raced up alongside them. Then, when they saw the white stars on the jeeps, they waved and cheered. Down by the river, I spoke to 23-year-old Capt. Alexander Siderenko, while some of his men, fine-looking soldiers, young, bronzed, exceptionally well dressed and equipped, kept the party going with accordion music, somewhat alarmingly punctuated with close-by explosions as their comrades on the other side practised panzerfaust fire.

### Only Way to Control Germany

Siderenko said, "I went out into the woods last night to tell the German civilians that they had nothing to fear, and that we had not come as murderers but as soldiers fighting for a just cause. Stalin's order is that we shall not molest civilians, we must take prisoners of war without injury or danger to their lives, and that this is a war for the right to enjoy life and to respect the rights of other people. That is what we are here for, and that is what we must stick to."

I asked him what he thought of the proposed joint control of Germany. "I think it is the only way to control Germany," he said, "and we Russians will willingly stay here until she has learned that other people have rights equal to their own." Lt. Arnold Gonorowski chimed in heartily, "That goes for me too!"

# 'The Target, Gentlemen, is Berchtesgaden!'

Down on Hitler's lair in the Bavarian Alps rained 12,000-lb. earthquake bombs—a present from Britain. Trees were thrown like straws to the sky, the ground spewed rocks and earth. V. Brown, News Chronicle war correspondent in one of the Lancasters, wrote this story on April 25, 1945.

It was dark and cold at the R.A.F. station in England this morning when the Lancaster bomber crews filed in for their briefing. The wing-commander stood up. With a half-smile he said: "The target, gentlemen, is Berchtesgaden!"

All knew the significance of the raid. Berchtesgaden, Hitler's mountain home, was the nerve centre of the Redoubt, headquarters of any final resistance by the enemy. It was still dark when we climbed into the laden Lancasters. The engines roared. Flt.-Lt. L. E. Marsh, of Dunfermline (awarded the D.F.C. for helping to sink the Tirpitz and veteran of 30 missions), piloted the bomber in which I flew. He put his thumb in the air—and we were off to Berchtesgaden. About 350 heavies took part in the attack.

As we flew over England, over the Channel, over Belgium—still black, before the April dawn had risen—I tried to remember what I had heard about Berchtesgaden, the Eagle's Nest. Francois Poncet, the former French Ambassador to Berlin, in an official book described how from a distance it looks like an observatory perched 6,000 ft. up (twice the height of Snowdon) on the crest of a mountain. He told how he drove along a winding road cut through the rock, and then entered a long tunnel. Next he entered a large, copper-plated lift, and was carried 300 ft. up to the top. And there was Hitler's home. He had a vivid phrase. When you looked out, he said, it was like being in an aeroplane in flight. Now real aeroplanes in deathly flight were on their way to this strange abode.

Dawn came and we saw the Rhine. Over the Continent we made rendezvous with our escort of United States Mustang fighters, emerging from the sunrise like a cloud of midges. In one great formation we flew on to the Bavarian Alps. Around me the crew were busy. It was a symbolic moment when they examined the recognition signals which would be shown by any Russian planes we might meet in the course of our flight.

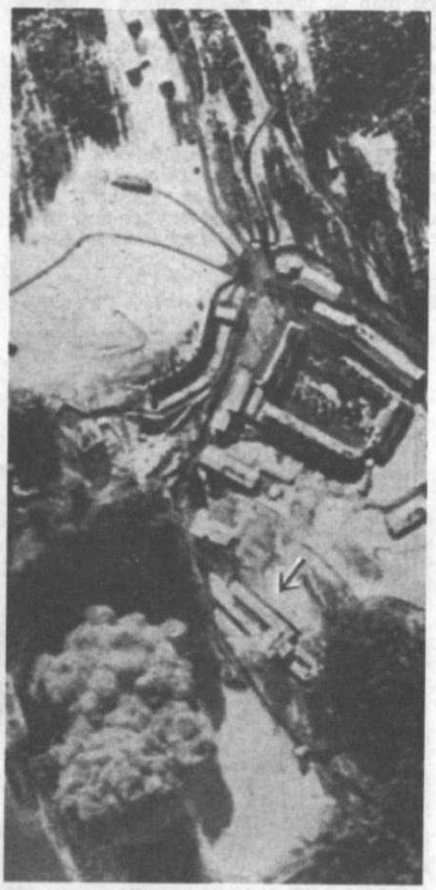
Germany unrolled below us. The countryside was brown and green and peaceful. Lake Constance came in view, shimmering like a mirror. There was no flak, no sign of enemy fighters. We avoided Swiss territory and flew on to the Bavarian Alps. The navigator, Flying Officer A. Brown, of Toronto, pointed them out to me. Said the bomb-aimer, Flying Officer J. A. Carr, of Vancouver, "I've never before seen anything quite so beautiful!" But the target was near. As we approached Berchtesgaden, "The Eagle's Nest" could be easily seen, on its pinnacle in its picture-postcard setting.

Six Lancasters headed towards it. I saw their bombs fall as we flew alongside to drop our load. It was horrific. Into this scene below, which had the prettiness of a Victorian postcard, burst some of the most powerful bombs ever devised by man—12,000 lb. earthquake bombs. Our plane rocked.

Below, the ground spewed rocks and earth and bricks, and even trees were uprooted and thrown like straws in the sky. Planes were above, below and alongside us. The huge bombs went down at regular intervals. Said the engineer, Pilot Officer L. Harrison, of London, "Not one must be wasted. We've either to be certain to hit the target or bring them back."

I saw 30 bombs go down—there may have been more—on the target area, which included the large S.S. barracks where Hitler's Storm-troopers are stationed. There were at least two direct hits on the Eagle's Nest. As I write, great clouds of smoke roll to the sky. All the target is now covered in smoke: you can smell it inside the plane. There are no enemy fighters. Even the flak is not so heavy as anticipated . . .

We are nearing our English base. We have been in the air almost nine hours and flown 1,600 miles. Below us lies the glory of the English landscape in spring, but I keep thinking of that mountain grandeur we have just visited. Hitler's home, "like an aeroplane in flight," will soar no more on its mountain top.



**BOMBS FOR HITLER'S CHALET** at Berchtesgaden (top) are seen (bottom) falling near their target during the daylight raid by R.A.F. Lancasters described in this page.
*Photos, British Official and New York Times Photos*

# Stalingrad Banners Waved on Berlin Hills

Making for the heart of the Third Reich, with lips blackened and parched with thirst and dust, the Soviet Guards, some of whom had fought all the way from Stalingrad, carried red flags to plant on the heights dominating Berlin, as narrated in Soviet War News by V. Vishnevsky and I. Zolin.

None of us will ever forget that night. Twenty-three bridges had been thrown across the swollen Oder. Engines roared in unison. Pillars of heavy dust hung in the air. The glow on the western horizon grew bigger and bigger as our parachute flares exposed every nook and cranny of the German lines. Shell-bursts lit up the sky. The earth trembled, and over the German positions rose an immense fountain of smoke, earth and rocks.

The aircraft added their noise to the general din; their targets were the enemy's front line rail communications. By the time they had finished the steel rails were twisted into hoops. We found a German armoured train called "Berlin" standing intact in Seelow station, unable to move in either direction. The gunfire made all conversation impossible.

A Guards unit brought its Stalingrad banner to the forward trenches. That banner had been borne from the Volga to the very approaches of Berlin. Senior Sergeant Mosolov, Junior Sergeant Shmokov and Sergeant Shapovalov, all of them cavaliers of the Order of Glory, carried the colours. The folds opened in the breeze: the face of Lenin was turned to the west, towards the enemy. Flashes of gunfire lit up the assembly of red banners.

The colours were paraded slowly through the narrow trenches, and the Guards, on bended knee, kissed the fringe. The ceremony was conducted in silence. There was no need for words, here before Berlin. As they advanced the Soviet Guards carried red flags to plant on the heights that cover Berlin. The flags were carried in front of the troops, borne by the boldest and bravest. When one standard-bearer fell the flag was immediately taken by another. Corporal Igor Ivanov was badly wounded. The flag he carried was erected on a hill far to the west.

By seven in the morning it was fully light. Dust and smoke lay over us like a blanket, getting thicker every moment. An intricate trench system was buttressed by pillboxes, blockhouses, tanks dug into the earth, cleverly sited artillery, machine-guns and light field guns emplaced in cellars, attics and sheds. In short, every square foot of the soil of Brandenburg—cornfields and gardens, greenhouses, railway embankments, woods, parks and cemeteries—had been fortified.

Every building was a link in the scheme of defence—a link that had to be flattened, battered or destroyed by an artillery barrage, by a sudden infantry attack, or by an encirclement manoeuvre. We stumbled over a wilderness of smashed bricks. This was once a German village that had been converted into a solid fort. The Soviet guns had obliterated it. Trees had been uprooted. The pond was filled in with debris and dust.

Now and then a Messerschmitt would fly over the battlefield at 600 ft., hunting for field hospital units. That is what these "knights of the air," these "Richthofen" heroes have come to. It was pleasant to see one of these jackals brought down by the Soviet A.A. guns.

I have just visited a battery commanded by a Georgian, Captain Ushuradze of the Guards, which has fought its way to Berlin all the way from Stalingrad . . . The great toilers of war, the sappers, pass by us. They blow up everything the Germans can build, even their trickiest fortifications, lying underground to a depth of 300 ft. or more. There is a dull yellowish haze over the sun.

The battle rages ever more fiercely. There is a cloud of dust over the Berlin autobahn. Russia, the Ukraine, Byelorussia, Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaidjan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia are marching on Berlin.

Dust, dust, dust . . . Nothing to drink, everything dried up, burnt out. But nothing matters. We are going on to Berlin with lips black and parched. The distance grows less on the signposts. The heavy guns go by to fire their first salvos into Berlin.

**LIGHT MACHINE-GUNNER from one of the Red Army units which made contact with the forces of the Western Allies on the Elbe, during the last week of April 1945.**

# *I Went With the Green Berets to Osnabruck*

Senior Brigade Chaplain and R.C. Chaplain to the 1st Commando Brigade, the Rev. Terence Quinlan, R.N. (known throughout the Brigade as "The Bish"), tells how he stopped a sniper's bullet—and made his captors his captives. Osnabruck was cleared of the enemy on April 5, 1945.

At a fork in the road to Osnabruck I took the wrong turning. I was in my jeep with my driver. The first we knew anything was wrong was a sniper's bullet. It was a rotten shot and missed us by miles. We decided it was just an odd sniper, and pushed on, but 100 yards down the road a fusillade broke out from all sides. The hail of bullets shot the tires to pieces and we had to stop. We baled out pretty promptly and crouched down behind the jeep looking for cover. Then I was hit in the back of the leg and bled profusely.

I made a dash for a house by the road, but the door was locked. I hammered on the door with my stick, and a woman opened it. She looked alarmed, but I limped in and my driver joined me. The Jerries must have been rotten shots, or we should have been cut to pieces. While my wound was being attended to, ten or fifteen Germans walked into the basement. They let my driver finish dressing the wound, then told us to get outside. It was then I noticed a row of the German field grey hats poking up behind a hedge.

We were led across country, through gardens and over railway embankments. They were a most disorderly crowd. There were at least 100 of them, and they just straggled along. I told them they were completely surrounded and they might just as well give up. Some were muttering among themselves and appeared quite willing, but two N.C.O.s ordered them on. They told me their officers had left them the day before.

I had walked about a mile when my leg began to bleed again, so an escort of two Germans was left to guard my driver and me. We entered the south of Osnabruck. We were the first British to enter that part of the town, and I asked the escort if there was a church nearby. He pointed to one, and I sat on the steps to rest my leg. Immediately a large crowd of foreign workers gathered, attracted by British soldiers with green berets. I asked one of the workers to fetch a priest, who offered me the hospitality of his house. He gave us lunch—my escort as well—and told me he could be shot for harbouring British soldiers.

I then turned to the two German soldiers and asked them: "Are we with you, or you with us?" and they replied: "With you." They threw away their ammunition and rifles and became our prisoners. It was then reported that some British troops with guns were in the south of the town, so I asked them to send for a doctor and ambulance. The doctor arrived, patched me up, and drove me and my prisoners to the centre of the town to meet up with my Commandos who were in the north-west of Osnabruck.

We began to walk through Osnabruck, and the populace gazed in wonderment, for we were the first British troops in that part. We met my Commandos and handed over our prisoners. The next day I saw a number of other prisoners brought in and I recognized many of them who had been among my captors the previous day.

# OUR DIARY OF THE WAR

***APRIL 25, Wednesday*** *2,062nd day*

**Air.**—Hitler's Berchtesgaden chalet attacked by Lancasters with 12,000-lb. bombs. U.S. bombers attacked Skoda armament works at Pilsen.

**Russian Front.**—Zhukov's and Konievs forces joined up near Potsdam, completing encirclement of Berlin.

***APRIL 26, Thursday*** *2,063rd day*

**Elbe.**—American and Russian forces linked up at Torgau, N.E. of Leipzig.

**Western Front.**—U.S. 3rd Army crossed Danube both sides of Regensburg.

**Russian Front.**—Stettin on Baltic, and Brno, Czechoslovakia, captured by Soviet troops. In Berlin, districts of Dahlem and Siemensstadt were taken.

**Italy.**—5th Army captured Verona and crossed the Adige; Mantua and Parma also captured.

**Japan.**—Super-Fortresses attacked airfields on Kyushu and Shikoku.

**Germany.**—Announced that Goering, owing to heart disease, had relinquished command of Luftwaffe.

***APRIL 27, Friday*** *2,064th day*

**Western Front.**—Bremen captured by British troops. 3rd Army captured Regensburg and crossed into Austria.

**Russian Front.**—Potsdam, Spandau and Rathenow captured by Soviet troops. Neukölln and Tempelhof occupied in Berlin. Wittenberg on the Elbe captured.

**Italy.**—Genoa occupied by 5th Army troops after Italian partisans had seized control from Germans. Milan also taken over by partisans.

***APRIL 28, Saturday*** *2,065th day*

**Western Front.**—Augsburg captured by U.S. 3rd Army.

**Italy.**—Mussolini and members of his cabinet executed by Italian partisans. Bergamo, Brescia, Vicenza and Padua occupied by Allied troops.

**Germany.**—First news of Himmler's offer to surrender to Britain and U.S.A. through Swedish intermediary.

***APRIL 29, Sunday*** *2,066th day*

**Italy.**—German armies in North Italy and West Austria capitulated; surrender terms signed at Naples, effective from May 2. 8th Army troops entered Venice.

**Western Front.**—British troops crossed lower Elbe near Lauenburg. Troops of 7th Army captured Oberammergau.

**Russian Front.**—In street battles in Berlin, district of Moabit and Anhalter station were captured.

**Netherlands.**—First supplies of food dropped from R.A.F. aircraft to Dutch civilians in western Holland.

**General.**—Formation of provisional government in Austria announced by Moscow radio.

***APRIL 30, Monday*** *2,067th day*

**Western Front.**—Munich captured by U.S. 7th Army.

**Russian Front.**—Reichstag building in Berlin captured by Soviet troops. In Czechoslovakia, Moravaka Ostrava was carried by storm.

**Italy.**—Turin entered by U.S. troops after its capture by Italian partisans. Tito's Yugoslav forces broke into Trieste.

**Indian Ocean.**—Andaman and Nicobar Is. bombarded by E. Indies fleet.

***MAY 1, Tuesday*** *2,068th day*

**Germany.**—Death of Hitler in Berlin announced by Admiral Dönitz, who succeeded him as Fuehrer.

**Russian Front.**—Soviet troops captured Stralsund on the Baltic and city of Brandenburg; inside Berlin Charlottenburg and Schoeneberg were cleared.

**Italy.**—N.Z. troops of 8th Army made contact with Tito's troops at Monfalcone, west of Trieste.

**Burma.**—14th Army troops occupied Pegu. Parachute troops landed south of Rangoon.

**Pacific.**—Australian troops landed on Tarakan Island off Borneo.

***MAY 2, Wednesday*** *2,069th day*

**Western Front.**—Baltic ports of Luebeck and Wismar captured by British.

**Russian Front.**—Berlin's last defenders surrendered to Russians. Baltic ports of Rostock and Warnemunde also captured.

**Burma.**—Allied forces landed from sea on both banks of Rangoon river.

**Italy.**—German garrison in Trieste surrendered to 8th Army. Germans still fighting Tito's troops.

***MAY 3, Thursday*** *2,070th day*

**Western Front.**—German defences collapsed in the north; Hamburg surrendered to British. Passau and Braunau (Hitler's birthplace) captured by U.S. 3rd Army advancing in Austria.

**Russian Front.**—Teschen, on Czech-Polish frontier, occupied by Russians.

**Burma.**—Rangoon entered by Allied land forces. Prome also captured.

**Japan.**—Super-Fortresses bombed airfields on Kyushu.

**Netherlands.**—First land-borne supplies of food handed over to Dutch.

***MAY 4, Friday*** *2,071st day*

**Western Front.**—German land, sea and air forces in North-west Germany, Holland and Denmark surrendered to 21st Army Group; terms effective 8 a.m. May 5.

**Italy.**—Troops of 7th Army occupied Innsbruck and Salzburg, drove through Brenner Pass and linked up with 5th Army troops at Vipiteno.

**Japan.**—Super-Fortresses attacked airfields on Honshu and Kyushu.

***MAY 5, Saturday*** *2,072nd day*

**Western Front.**—German Army Group "G" surrendered to Gen. Devers' 6th Army Group. In Austria U.S. 3rd Army captured Linz.

**Russian Front.**—Swinemunde and Peenemunde on the Baltic captured by Red Army.

**Czechoslovakia.**—Street fighting in progress in Prague between Germans and Czech patriots.

**Denmark.**—First Allied troops entered Copenhagen.

***MAY 6, Sunday*** *2,073rd day*

**Western Front.**—Pilsen, Czech arms centre, captured by U.S. 3rd Army, advancing on Prague on wide front.

**Russian Front.**—Rokossovsky's troops captured and cleared Baltic Island of Rügen.

***MAY 7, Monday*** *2,074th day*

**General.**—Gen. Jodl, representative of German High Command and of Adm. Dönitz, signed at Rheims act of unconditional surrender of all German land, sea and air forces in Europe.

**Western Front.**—Canadians entered Emden, Polish armour entered Wilhelmshaven. British and Canadian troops moved into Denmark and Holland.

**Russian Front.**—Breslau capitulated to Russians after 82 days' siege.

**Italy.**—Troops of 8th Army crossed Italian frontier into Austria.

***MAY 8, Tuesday*** *2,075th day*

**General.**—Ratification of German surrender signed in Berlin at midnight by Field-Marshal Keitel, chief of German High Command, Marshal Zhukov and Air Chief Marshal Tedder.

**Russian Front.**—Dresden, last large German city, occupied by Russians after two days' battle.

**Czechoslovakia.**—German C.-in-C. in Bohemia surrendered in Prague: groups of Germans still fighting Russians.

**Balkans.**—Zagreb, capital of Croatia, liberated from Germans.

**Burma.**—First deep-water ships sailed up Rangoon river to Rangoon.

**Home Front.**—Mr. Churchill proclaimed end of war in Europe.

## *Flash-backs*

**1940**

May 2. *Allied troops left Aandalsnes and Namsos, Norway.*

**1941**

April 26. *Germans crossed Egyptian frontier at Sollum.*

April 27. *Athens, capital of Greece, occupied by Germans.*

May 2. *Evacuation of Imperial forces from Greece completed.*

**1942**

May 1. *In Burma, British troops evacuated Mandalay.*

May 3. *Battle of Coral Sea began.*

May 5. *British troops landed on French island of Madagascar.*

May 6. *Corregidor, Philippines, fell after five months' siege.*

**1943**

May 7. *In Tunisia, cities of Bizerta and Tunis were captured.*

**1944**

April 26. *Australians captured Alexishafen in New Guinea.*

May 7. *Russians began final assault on Sebastopol, Crimea.*

# THE WAR IN THE AIR

*by* Capt. Norman Macmillan, M.C., A.F.C.

FROM September 3, 1939, to April 28, 1945, the Royal Air Force Commands in the United Kingdom lost 11,449 aircraft and destroyed 7,911 enemy aircraft. Bomber Command lost 7,997 and destroyed 759; Fighter Command lost 2,998 and destroyed 6,977; Coastal Command lost 454 and destroyed 175. To these figures have yet to be added the losses of the Tactical Air Forces serving overseas in Western Europe, Italy, and the Far East, and of the Fleet Air Arm—together with their scores of victory—before we shall know the complete cost of the war in aircraft up to the moment of impending German defeat. And there should also be added the losses in training aircraft and gliders, and in Army Air Observation Posts and Transport Command. But, already, the figures announced show that the numerical first-line aircraft strength of the R.A.F. at the outbreak of the war has been destroyed five-and-a-half times in the losses of these three Commands alone. The compensation for this heavy price of victory in the air is the knowledge that it has helped to reduce the cost of the war on land and at sea, both in lives and materials. Indeed, it is problematical if Germany could have been defeated without the use of air power on a lavish scale. But there can be no doubt that our air losses would have been reduced, and the duration of the war curtailed, if the R.A.F. had been adequately prepared for war when it began. This is a lesson to be learnt for the future—always to be fully insured against loss.

## DIVERSE Conditions With Which Tactical Air Forces Contended

In these days of victory over Nazi Germany it is appropriate to discuss the Tactical Air Forces which have given such magnificent close support to the armies in the field.

The degree of comfort of squadrons of the Tactical Air Forces varied tremendously. Sometimes they had to work under improvised conditions on airstrips where they had landed during the day, returning to rear bases at night. Once the armies gained a foothold of sufficient extent, the Tactical Air Forces began to operate from bases which they did not regard as forward airstrips, although they were often little more.

When the Continent had been well secured, by the autumn of 1944, there was room for more squadrons. But some units of 2nd T.A.F. were still operating from United Kingdom bases at the beginning of February 1945. Those that were on the Continent had a great variety of conditions to contend with. Some Wings were based on airfields which had been permanent airfields of our Allies before they were occupied and used by the Germans; in some cases the Luftwaffe improved these bases, but in other cases R.A.F. Bomber Command damaged them very seriously, while the U.S. Army Air Forces damaged others, with the result that what had once been excellently equipped air bases housed the Tactical Air Squadrons in very draughty and often overcrowded conditions.

THE Luftwaffe also used camouflage fairly effectively on their airfields, disguising hangars as houses by means of painting, and often trying to make an airfield look like a farmstead; they built quarters and offices accordingly, and these were sometimes as uncomfortable as farm outbuildings can be. The messes of some airfields were several miles away, located perhaps in a château, or in a building in a town, while in other cases they were housed in newly erected wooden buildings put up by local labour in wet weather from local standing timber that was still green and damp. One airfield I visited was like a scene from a cowboy film. It was sited in a forested piece of country about six miles behind the front. Runways had been cut through the fir trees which grew on sand as real as that of the desert or the seashore. On top of the sand were laid the hinged perforated steel plates that were needed to make a surface suitable for Typhoons to take off and alight and taxi upon. Dispersal points were surfaced in the same way. Great mounds of sand had been thrust up to form shelters, and there was water in the trough from which it had been taken, forming a natural swimming pool, in which the men swam. Recce cars of the R.A.F. Regiment were posted on top of the mounds as A.A. defence. On this airfield one could hear the guns firing in the fighting line, and an occasional shell came down not far off.

Glades, like shooting brakes, were cut through the forest to serve as roads. Soon the jeeps cut up the loose sand, and when the rain came these roads were several feet deep in soft mud and impassable; new roads had then to be cut through the trees.

HUTS were built under the fir branches, which gave them natural camouflage; they were a local shape, which gave the camp an appearance foreign to the R.A.F.; they were built of planks sawn from the felled trees; one reached them by footpaths in the forest. The officers' mess had a floor of square, red Dutch tiles; damp sweated upon them in a heavy film of moisture; trestle tables and collapsible benches gave seating accommodation: crockery and cutlery were coarse. In the ante-room was a bar that might have come from a film of the Yukon in the gold rush, except that there were no women.

There were few W.A.A.F.s in 2nd T.A.F., and none in the field squadrons. This made a striking difference between Home and Continental air stations. But the very conditions of the overseas units brought the war home closer than it seemed to be on stations in the U.K. Typhoons, Tempests, Spitfires, Meteors, Mitchells and Mosquitoes made up the formidable array of 2nd T.A.F., a force that scourged the enemy by day and night, and contributed in no small measure to the success of the armies they supported.

When the bombed enemy troops came out dazed by concussion, the troops called them "bomb happy." The 51st Highland Division had an unfortunate experience of close support bombing in Normandy. They refused further such support until the beginning of the attack on the Rhine, where the support given by 2nd T.A.F. bombers was so effective that they asked for it to be given on all occasions thereafter.

## DEFEAT of German Army Ascribed Mainly to the Effect of Bombing

In the five days preceding the surrender to Field-Marshal Montgomery of the North-West German forces on May 4, 1945, 2nd T.A.F. destroyed 150 ships, including submarines, trying to get away to Norway, 116 aircraft, and 4,500 vehicles involved in the German military traffic jam in Denmark.

Rundstedt, a prisoner of war, ascribed the defeat of the German Army mainly to the effect of the Allies' strategic bombing, especially the cutting of communications. The destruction of railways and bridges prevented supplies from reaching the German armies; that caused the failure of the Ardennes offensive, which had been designed to advance the German defence line to the river Meuse from Liége, and so protect the Ruhr.

**SIKORSKY R4B HELICOPTERS OF THE R.A.F., photographed for the first time flying in formation, at an R.A.F. training school. Capable of rising vertically, flying backwards, forwards or sideways, and hovering to drop or pick up passengers, these aircraft are expected to play an important part in Britain's post-war aerial development.** *Photo, Planet News*

As the strategic air assault died away with the overrunning of Germany, Bomber Command and the U.S.A. 8th A.F. were diverted to humanitarian ends, proof, were such needed, that the aeroplane can be a blessing and not alone a curse. These Commands dropped supplies of food to the starving Dutch people in Western Holland, releasing over 800 tons daily from April 29 above the large cities. (See illus. p. 54.)

WHEN the forces of Montgomery drove into Hamburg, May 3, they found nine square miles of that great city destroyed by the attacks of Bomber Command in July and August 1943. Japan will watch reports of this nature with the keenness of despair.

Rangoon was entered on the same day as Hamburg. The final advance of the 14th Army on the Burmese capital was assisted by the advance dropping of paratroops south of Rangoon, on May 1, and by a landing from the sea under the support of ships and aircraft on the next day. The landings were preceded by bombing attacks on military installations and troops in Rangoon city area.

At 3 p.m. on May 2 Berlin surrendered to the Red Army. Next day it was announced in the U.K. that no more air raid warnings would be sounded. The Civil Defence Service was to be disbanded

# This Was a London Market Until a V2 Fell

**FARRINGDON MARKET IN LONDON,** one morning in early March 1945, was crowded with shoppers when a rocket bomb fell amongst the street stalls. The dead numbered 110, and the seriously injured 123. Many victims, trapped in the debris of masonry and girders, were traced with the aid of bloodhounds. In the background is the world-famous Smithfield Meat Market. On April 27 it was revealed that the total number of rocket bombs that reached this country was 1,050. The first fell at Chiswick on Sept. 8, 1944.



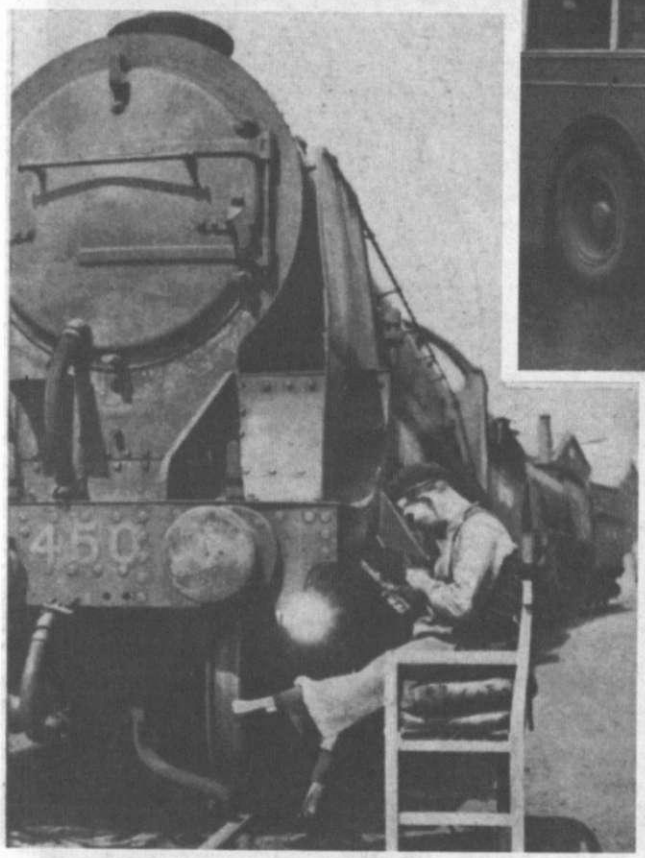
*Photo, Topical*

# Our Roving Camera Sees First Fruits of Victory

**HASTINGS PREPARED FOR INVASION**—this time, according to this entertaining poster, by an onrush of holiday-makers following the announcement of Victory Day in Europe.

**BRIGHTON IS ITSELF AGAIN** and youngsters take full advantage of the Children's Bathing Pool, reopened in late April 1945, after having been closed since 1940. The foreshore from Black Rock to Saltdean was reopened on March 8.

**"ALL CLEAR" ON LONDON'S BUSES** was signified on April 26, 1945, when the first bus appeared with the protective netting removed from its window panes after over 4½ years. The total number of windows so treated was 381,591, involving 549,122 yards of material.




**LEGLESS RAILWAY WORKER** sits down to his job in this special chair provided by the Southern Railway. He is Mr. F. J. Clarke, a welder. Formerly an employee of the company, he had both legs amputated—one above and the other below the knee—while serving with the Royal Armoured Corps in France in 1944.

**BLITZED BUILDINGS BULLDOZED AWAY** in London (right), where the scars left by the Luftwaffe are being swiftly removed by these "mechanical navvies." On April 27 it was announced that over 5,400 firms were employed in rebuilding the Capital.



*Photos, Keystone, Fox, Topical*

# Editor's Postscript

THE Opera House at San Francisco, where the Allied Nations Conference (see illus. page 52) is being held as I write, is one of the most interesting buildings in the New World. Not only is it a masterpiece as regards its seating and acoustics, but it also represents San Francisco's solution of the war memorial problem with which she was faced after the cessation of hostilities in 1918. The Opera House and the Veterans' Hall adjoining it, together with the beautifully laid-out courtyard in between, are probably the most "practical" war memorial in existence. It will surprise many of my music-loving readers—especially those who imagine that America is the musician's paradise—to learn that it is the only municipally owned opera house in the United States. The Philistines will be equally surprised to learn that since it was built in 1932 it has shown an appreciable margin of profit at the end of each season. A well-known English baritone who has sung there tells me that its acoustics are at least as good as Covent Garden's—which is to say, as good as any in the world—and the accommodation for just over 3,000 is exactly the same. On the other hand, the atmosphere, especially at an important début, is as delirious as at the San Carlos in Naples, where I once watched an infuriated audience storm the stage because the tenor skidded badly off his top notes. The account of the highly theatrical opening of the Conference suggests that the stage manager at least has not been axed for the duration of international deliberations in the stalls.

I SHALL be interested to read the comments of the Dominions Press on Mr. Lionel Curtis's new book, World War: Its Cause and Cure, a copy of which has been delivered to me from the Oxford University Press. For Mr. Curtis—who will be remembered for his activities on behalf of Federal Union—here puts forward the startling suggestion that Quebec should be the future defence H.Q. of the British Empire! Mr. Curtis contends that "the British Commonwealth is in jeopardy (and so is the peace of the world) until it is armed so strongly that no one thinks of attacking it." The solution he offers is that Britain should establish a vast defence union with the Dominions—a Commonwealth Defence Union, he calls it—to secure adequate security for the Empire as a whole, the cost of maintaining it to be a "first charge on all the resources of the self-governing Dominions, no less than on those of Great Britain and Northern Ireland." In other words, "an international Government of British democracies." It is his contention—with which few will disagree—that the best place to train such vast mechanized forces as would be needed by the Defence Union would be the almost boundless plains of Canada, where they could be so widely dispersed as to be virtually invulnerable to air attack from Europe. Hence the proposal to make Quebec the H.Q. of the Empire's defences. Mr. Curtis is plainly no blind optimist when it comes to plain thinking about the possibility of future wars. Some of our airy-minded pacifist gentry could do worse than spend 7s. 6d. on his stimulating book.

SOMEHOW "V Day" sounds better than "VE Day," though the latter is more correct as signifying Victory in Europe; but I still prefer to call it V Day! And, retaining vivid memories of the mob behaviour on Mafeking night, of being caught in the crowd at Ludgate Circus when the C.I.V. returned from South Africa and fought their way up to St. Paul's as single stragglers through a shrieking mass of hysterical humanity, and of the scenes in Fleet Street and the Strand when the Armistice was announced on November 11, 1918, I was apprehensive of what I might encounter in London when V Day was officially announced. But the declaration of the two National holidays came sooner than I expected by at least twenty-four hours and made needless my return to town during these celebrations. For this I was thankful, as I have an ingrain dislike of popular celebrations where order and good sense are so often abrogated. At my country home in Downland—where I could look on the pitiful wreckage of a Dakota which two nights earlier missed hitting my chimney-stacks and smashed into a small hill less than a mile beyond—here, I was tempted to follow Professor Gilbert Murray's plan of celebrating the great event by having a peaceful sleep, after five years of troubled nights! Only the need to do some urgent writing and the loveliness of the weather made me refrain. I returned to my job in London on the Thursday fresher and happier I am sure than if I had gone through the two days of Saturnalia; but I gather that the exciting occasion was marred by hardly any of the rowdyism of Mafeking night or Armistice Day. The manners of the populace are evidently improving.

**Admiral KARL DÖNITZ, who on May 1, 1945, proclaimed himself Fuehrer of the Third Reich in succession to Adolf Hitler, who was reported to have died in Berlin on that day (See also page 45.)** *Photo, Sport & General*

IT is a melancholy reflection that while wars have diminished the "expectation of life" (as the insurance companies call it) for the young—especially young men—that expectation is becoming longer, through the healthier manner in which we live, for the old. In the last forty years there has been so marked a change in the United States that both men and women can now expect to live fifteen years longer than their 19th-century forerunners. Exactly the same tendency is visible here. If you read the deaths column in The Times newspaper you will find that on most days of the week the average length of years recorded is well over seventy. Turn back to the files of the paper for half-a-century ago and the figure will turn out to be between fifty and sixty. Something must be allowed for the fact that those who appear in The Times as having departed this life are people who have been well looked after. But, taking the population all round, there is no doubt that the span of life has been extended. Fortunately those whom we used to call old have brisked up so heartily that a very large number of them seem no more than middle-aged. That makes the prospect less gloomy than it might have been.

ALL predictions and even probabilities may be knocked sideways by changes that may alter the population problem entirely. When the Rev. T. R. Malthus deplored the increase in numbers in England during the early part of last century and said there would soon not be enough food to go round, he was made to look foolish by the enormous supplies of food which we received from across the Atlantic. His reasoning was sound enough according to the state of things at the moment, but it was quickly falsified by new events. So it may be again. The warning of the experts that in a hundred years' time Britain may have a population of no more than 12 millions may be dissipated in the same way. Families may become larger again. I was surprised, by the way, to see that the National Council of Women think "public opinion tends to pity, even to jeer at, mothers of large families." Nearer the mark, I should say, is the finding that women feel they cannot keep up companionship with their husbands if they have too many children to look after. It is all a question of personality. You can't lay down any hard and fast rules.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# Flames and Fanatics Subdued on the Elbe

**DRIVING INTO BLAZING BORN, shock troops of the U.S. 9th Army on the Elbe front encountered fanatical enemy remnants in the doomed village. General Simpson's was the first Allied Army to reach and cross the Elbe, on April 11-12, 1945. Farther north on April 29 the British 1st Commando Brigade and the 15th Scottish Division crossed the river and took Lauenburg, all but isolating Denmark; which, with North-West Germany and Holland, was surrendered unconditionally to Field-Marshal Montgomery on May 4.** *Photo, Planet News*

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